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the

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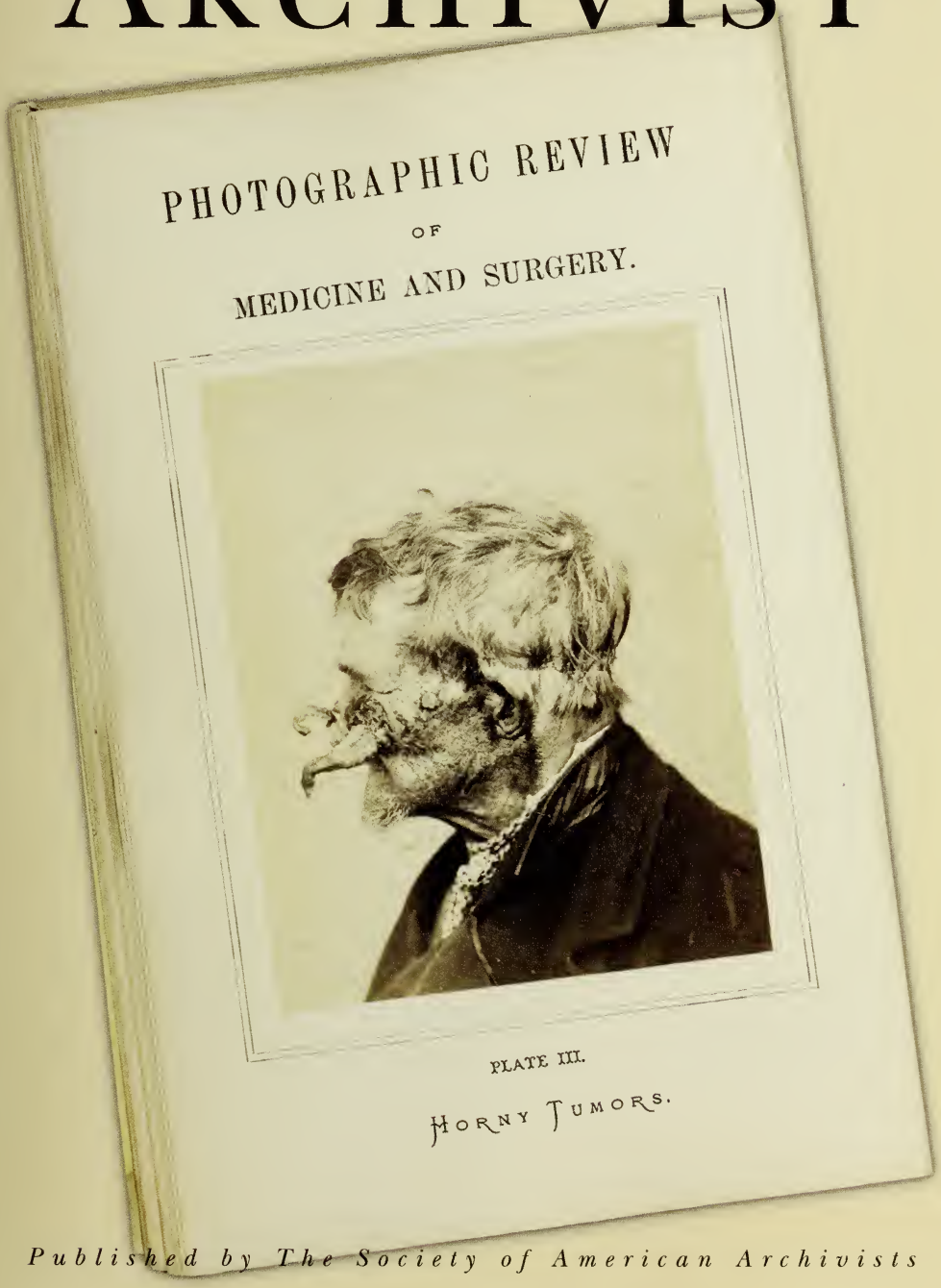

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About the Cover

The Photographic Review of Medicine and Surgery was published in Philadelphia from 1871 to 1872. The cover seen here shows a 78-year-old sea captain who had spent much of his life exposed to the weather and suffered several attacks of erysipelas, the last of which caused horny excrescences on his cheeks and nose. The "horns" had actually broken off before he sought medical help from Dr. William Pancoast, who reattached them with string for the photograph. Nineteenth-century patient photographs provide graphic evidence of symptoms that had progressed to extremes. In this issue of *American Archivist,* author Jeffrey Mifflin uses this arresting image and others in his article, "Visual Archives in Perspective: Enlarging on Historical Medical Photographs," to demonstrate the close relationship of photography and medicine. (Photographer unknown. Commissioned by Dr. William Pancoast, albumen print from gelatin dry plate negative, pasted in published journal. Boston Medical Library in the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, Harvard Medical School.)

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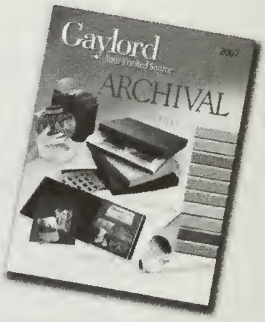

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GALLERY OF CONTRIBUTORS

Ben Blake is the archival specialist in the Pictorial Collections and Photographic Services Department of the Hagley Museum and Library in Wilmington, Delaware. Prior to this position, he was the assistant curator of manuscripts at the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland. Blake received his MLIS from the University of Pittsburgh, where he was a research assistant for Professor Richard J. Cox. In addition to labor and visual materials archives, his research interests include reference services, records management, electronic records, and digital archives.

Cheryl Gunselman is the manuscripts librarian in Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University Libraries, in Pullman, Washington. She holds an MA in liberal studies from Reed College and an MS in library and information science from the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She chose librarianship as a second career; until 1999 she was an account executive in the securities industry. Her research interests include social and cultural history of the Pacific Northwest, particularly the history of library and archival practice.

Julia Hendry is assistant special collections librarian at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She holds an MLIS from the University of Western Ontario and an MA from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Brewster Kahle is the director and co-founder of the Internet Archive, one of the largest collections of digital content in the world. In 1982, he helped start the supercomputer company, Thinking Machines, which built systems for searching large text collections. In 1989, he invented Wide Area Information Server (WAIS), the Internet's first publishing and distributed search system, which was purchased by America Online in 1995. He also worked with AOL as the company's Internet strategist from 1995 to 1996. In 1996, Brewster cofounded Alexa Internet to provide search and discovery services, which was purchased by Amazon in 1999. He is a board member of the Electronic Frontier Foundation and is a plaintiff in *Kahle v. Gonzales*

(formerly *Kahle v. Ashcroft*), which challenges recent copyright term extensions. He was elected as a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2005, among other honors.

Jeffrey Mifflin is the archivist and curator of special collections at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. He has worked as a curatorial assistant at Harvard's Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments and as an archivist at McLean Hospital, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Harvard Business School, and the Pioneer Group. He has an AB from Harvard University, a JD from Northeastern University School of Law, a MA in history and archival methods from the University of Massachusetts at Boston, and an MS in library and information science from Simmons Library School. His research interests focus on the interrelationships connecting written, physical, and pictorial traces of the past.

Richard Pearce-Moses has been a professional archivist for more than twenty years. He has been a certified archivist since 1989, and he was named a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) in 2005. He served as SAA president in 2005–2006. Pearce-Moses has worked in government, museum, and academic archives, and with all types of materials, including photographs, manuscripts, and electronic records. Currently he is director of digital government information at the Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records. He has an MA in American studies from the University of Texas at Austin and an MS in library and information science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Pearce-Moses has numerous publications to his credit, including *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* (Society of American Archivists, 2005).

Peter J. Roberts is an assistant professor and certified archivist in the Special Collections and Archives at Georgia State University, where he has worked since 1984. He has published articles in *Public Services Quarterly* and *College and Research Libraries.* He has an MAT in museum education from George Washington University and a BA (with high honors) in art history from Emory University. He is a member of the American Philatelic Society.

Deborah A. Torres is assistant professor, master's program of Library and Information Science, College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, Minnesota. She teaches courses in LIS, administration of archives and special collections, and advanced archival administration. She is interested in diversity issues for the archival profession and in issues for documenting underrepresented communities, such as GLBT and Latinos in the Midwest. Her research interests are in understanding family historians' and genealogists' use of records and archival collections, and the role of family photographs in everyday life. She is the current chair of the SAA Archival Educators Roundtable (AERT). She is a member of the newly formed Minnesota Network of Latinos in Higher Education.

Elizabeth Yakel is an associate professor at the University of Michigan School of Information where she teaches in the Archives and Records Management Specialization. Her research focuses on archival user needs and access to primary sources. She has received funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, and OCLC Online Computer Library Center and publishes on archival representation, access, and use in such publications as *American Archivist*, *Archivaria*, and *Archival Science*. She has also been active in the Society of American Archivists and was elected a Fellow in 1999.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Artifacts and Audiences

This issue's striking cover image is provided by author Jeffrey Mifflin for his paper, "Visual Archives in Perspective: Enlarging on Historical Medical Photographs." Many readers will remember his article " 'Mind and Sight': Visual Literacy and the Archivist" with Elisabeth Kaplan.[1] The cover image underscores the importance of context in understanding documents.[2] Photographs are not the unconscious byproducts of activity as we have so long thought archival documents to be. Mifflin notes that this patient's "horny excrescences" had actually broken off before he sought medical help. Dr. William Pancoast reattached them with string for the photograph.

In 1989, JoAnne Yates ably demonstrated that documents are created at the intersection of communications tools, such as the camera, and communication structures, such as medical periodicals in the nineteenth century or the United States Postal Service.[3] A document is, of course, an artifact, "a man-made, physical object."[4] David M. Levy, in an extended thought-provoking meditation, suggests that documents are a special class of artifacts, significantly different from other museum collections: "documents are representational artifacts."[5] He defines documents as "quite simply, talking things. They are bits of the material world—clay, stone, animal skin, plant fiber, sand—that we've imbued with the ability to speak. . . ." Or, more graphically, "Writing is the act of breathing our

[1] First published in *Archival Issues* 21, no. 2 (1996): 107–27 and reprinted in *American Archival Studies: Theory and Practice*, ed. Randall C. Jimerson (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2000).

[2] See also Helena Zinkham, "Reading and Researching Photographs," *Archival Outlook* (January/February 2007): II 6–7. 28.

[3] JoAnne Yates, *Control Through Communication: The Rise of System in American Management* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

[4] Richard Pearce-Moses, *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005).

[5] David M. Levy, *Scrolling Forward: Making Sense of Documents in the Digital Age* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2001) 30.

breath into the dust of the earth."[6] Levy notes that "Documents are exactly those artifacts to which we delegate the task of speaking for us. Each kind of document, each genre, is specialized to do a certain kind of job—to carry a certain kind of information and to operate within a particular realm of human activity."[7]

Although documents are representational artifacts, not all documents are talking artifacts. This issue of *American Archivist* provides perspectives on records created by human activity that carry certain kinds of information but do not speak: photographs, postal covers and stamps, and digital documents—including those that are "born digital" and those digitized after their creation.

The Photographic Review of Medicine and Surgery, whose cover we are re-using, was circulated through the United States Postal Service bimonthly to subscribers, who paid six dollars per year. Peter J. Roberts in "Philatelic Materials in Archival Collections: Their Appraisal, Preservation, and Description" demonstrates again that the postal service was the major communication structure in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Envelopes, covers, and stamps are the "wrappers" of documents, and these documentary artifacts may provide metadata important to understanding content. Today, we are coming to understand that the digital "wrappers" around digital documents, their metadata, are necessary for us to preserve and understand their content. Roberts also provides extensive citations to philatelic literature for learning more about these communication structures and artifacts. This essay might well be read in conjunction with Peter J. Wosh's review essay, "Going Postal," which won the Fellows' Ernst Posner Award in 2000.[8] Wosh notes that the postal service was "the first national information infrastructure," and he discusses its relationship to record making, recordkeeping, and communication patterns in the nineteenth century. As the award notes, Wosh "draws a variety of provocative parallels between the postal service and the Internet. The postal delivery of mail order catalogs in the post–Civil War era created 'a virtual marketplace without walls.' "

Today, of course, identifying and preserving digital documents to ensure access to them through time are central concerns for the profession. In his presidential address, "Janus in Cyberspace," Richard Pearce-Moses outlines three scenarios for archives in the digital future: things stay the same, things get worse, and things get better. His sober assessment of the first two scenarios demonstrates that archivists must learn the skills necessary to identify and preserve digital records to ensure his vision of the future in which "Archives are the focus of a dynamic community, connecting people to each other, to their past, and to their future." Internet pioneer Brewster Kahle envisions "Universal Access to

[6] Levy, *Scrolling Forward* , 23.

[7] Levy, *Scrolling Forward,* 27–28.

[8] Peter J.Wosh, "Going Postal," *American Archivist* 61 (Spring 1998): 220–39.

All Knowledge" in his presentation discussing his explorations in digitizing content and making it accessible on the Internet. His optimism and his activism encourage archivists to think big and to begin now.

Our cover photograph was used as the cover of the medical periodical *The Photographic Review of Medicine and Surgery*. We have repurposed the cover image for the *American Archivist*, in a context completely different from its first use, just as archival users repurpose archival documents. This issue brings new insights about some audiences for archives, including such user groups as genealogists, philatelists, teachers, and labor unions. In "Genealogists as a 'Community of Records,' " Elizabeth Yakel and Deborah Torres present thought-provoking observations of the actual behaviors of genealogists. Even though the study is small and localized, it is a suggestive view into how one of our most numerous constituencies, albeit one we are most likely to marginalize, sees research in archives. This study shows again that the impact of genealogy is not limited to the numbers of direct users, as impressive as these might be, but to uncounted, unknown, indirect users, both current families and future descendents, who hear the stories, see the photographs and documents, and listen to oral histories. In using archival records, genealogists seek meaning in the lives of their ancestors and project powerful narratives into the future for their descendants.

Peter J. Roberts also points to a potential user group, philatelists and postal historians, and offers advice about describing archival holdings so these groups can find and make use of them. Both genealogists and philatelists comprise impressive numbers of hobbyists who enrich their lives by using archives to create a usable history for themselves and for their families.

Julia Hendry, in "Primary Sources in K–12 Education: Opportunities for Archives," discusses the use of archival documents by teachers in the K–12 system, another group of direct users of archives whose impact is felt by large numbers of indirect users. She provides a useful review of current educational trends including "inquiry-based learning, document-based questions, and standardized testing" and shows how they have "converged to make primary resources an important teaching tool in elementary and secondary education." Most teachers, however, do not understand archival records and the importance of context. Hendry shows how archivists might take advantage of these trends to contribute our deep understanding of the creation and use of documents and of recordkeeping systems to teachers as they learn to use documents in the classroom.

In "Assessing Preservation Needs of Manuscript Collections with a Comprehensive Survey," Cheryl Gunselman reminds us that preservation is one of the three core elements of the archival mission. She provides a careful case study of how one institution developed and implemented a preservation survey tool for its manuscript holdings.

The use of images is critical to understanding Jeffrey Mifflin's article and enhances the articles by Peter J. Roberts and Cheryl Gunselman. I hope to use

more images in future issues and to improve graphics and to produce a better "bite" to the pages. Understanding the circumstances of the creation of records and recordkeeping systems is the particular province of archivists, just as Jeffrey Mifflin explores the social and technological context of the creation and use of these medical photographs. I hope to see more articles like it in *American Archivist. Archivaria,* the fine journal of our Canadian colleagues, publishes *Studies in Documents,* which presents "scholarly articles on the provenance, evolution, characteristics, structure, and original and present purposes of every kind of archival document or body of documents."

Ben Blake, whose paper, "The New Archives for American Labor: From Attic to Digital Shop Floor" received SAA's 2006 Theodore Calvin Pease Award, reviews more than a century of archival activity in identifying and preserving union records and making them accessible both to union members and scholars. He begins by noting that "Archivists have a duty to evaluate their past to build a better future, not only for the profession, but for those whom they serve." Blake concludes with a call for labor archives to forge a closer relationship with the union movement, especially by establishing records management and knowledge management partnerships with unions. Archivists admonish institutions to understand their past in order to plan for the future. In fact, we would do well to heed our own admonitions and study our past as carefully as Blake does in this fine student paper.

In that regard, I admonish you to provide your papers, thoughts, and advice as I enter my second year as editor of your journal.

Mary Jo Pugh

AmericanArchivist@archivists.org

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Janus in Cyberspace: Archives on the Threshold of the Digital Era

Richard Pearce-Moses

Janus, the Roman god who looks forward and backward, may be the perfect patron of archivists.[1] Archivists have one eye to the past, and the profession is commonly associated with history. At the same time, we have an eye to the future, and I believe that is where our focus should be. Although we are committed to preserving the record of what has been, we do so for the future.

As the spirit of doorways and arches, Janus is the perfect model for transitions. When passing through a door, one is simultaneously leaving and entering. As such, he is doubly symbolic for archivists. We are always on the threshold between the past and the future, but we are also currently in the midst of an extended transition between the paper and the digital eras.[2]

The boundary between these two eras is not perfectly distinct, and thus the transition is not instantaneous. Paper will remain a useful technology for the foreseeable future. Personally, I find it almost impossible to write using pen and paper; it's too slow. I find it easier to revise, reorganize, and rewrite on a PC. Still, I sometimes resort to paper precisely because it slows me down and forces me to think more carefully. Most of my audio recordings are compact discs, but I

Paper given as the 70th Presidential Address at the Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., 4 August 2006. I wish to thank the many individuals who commented on drafts of this paper, including David Gracy and the students in his advanced archives course at the University of Arizona's School of Information Resources and Library Science: Daisy DeCoster, Jonathan Drnjevic, Rita Erickson, Ellen Greene, Alicia Thomas, and Charlotte Walters. Others include Cal Lee, Robert Spindler, Mark A. Greene, Pat Galloway, and Ken Thibodeau.

[1] In fact, the International Council of Archives uses an image of Janus for its logo.

[2] In the interest of brevity, I will use the word *paper* to encompass film, tape, wire, and a host of other media, as well as textual, graphic, audio, and other formats.

still cling to a few vinyl LPs that have not been re-released. I have yet to send an instant message, and I'm of an age at which it seems a lot easier to just call my friends and actually talk to them.

Even though I've been working with computers since 1968, I'm only part way through this transition to the digital era. The same is true of society as a whole. Records continue to be created and kept in paper formats. If we've learned anything from past technological revolutions, old technologies never entirely die. In *The Myth of the Paperless Office*,[3] Sellen and Harper identify many things paper does much better than a digital counterpart, and there is no reason to expect people to adopt an inferior technology *just* because it's new.

Some archivists take comfort in the persistence of paper. Although I've heard it less often in recent years, I'm sure all of you have heard colleagues express the sentiment that they'll stick with paper to avoid learning about electronic records. I'd guess that some variation of that idea crosses the minds of the vast majority of archivists as they begin to contemplate what it will take to address the challenge of digital records. I hesitated at the digital doorway in spite of my familiarity with computers precisely because I knew about the difficult problems. Taking comfort in denial or avoidance may be understandable, but that attitude is not going to take us over the threshold.

Archivists are not the only professionals facing this challenge. Librarians are also grappling with technology. So are records managers. But other, more disparate professions are also struggling to cope with radical change. Lawyers and the courts are exploring the implications of discovery and authenticity of digital documents. Geographers and cartographers can be literally at a loss when data in geographic information systems cannot be migrated. Architects and engineers have had to learn computer-aided design. Moreover, we face this challenge in our personal lives as digital cameras and video, computers, PDAs, iPods, and other technologies capture our memories in digital formats.

Although we can see through the digital doorway, we can't see far. Each door to the future is followed by a seemingly infinite number of doors, choices to make and choices imposed on us. Not too long ago, planning documents looked out three to five years. Today, technology is changing so rapidly that we're lucky to be able to project eighteen months with any accuracy.

Nevertheless, we know something about the digital era because we already have one foot through that door. Computers are becoming commodities; we'll use handhelds that are as cheap and commonplace as legal pads to access and work with our data across a pervasive network. Today, the Web is a realization of Vannevar Bush's memex, and we'll have access to even more information in the future. Wikis, Amazon, and Google show us how people can work asynchronously and collectively to build useful resources, and we'll see more and

[3] Abigail J. Sellen and Richard H. R. Harper (Cambridge, Mass., and London: MIT Press, 2002).

more on-line collaboration tools. And, particularly important to archivists, we'll see changes in public expectations for access to information. We already see naïve notions that "if it's not on the Web, it doesn't exist," an attitude fully realized in the movie *Star Wars: Episode II—Attack of the Clones.*[4]

What might archives look like in this digital future? Although we can't predict it accurately, we can consider a variety of futures and develop contingency plans. Considering a variety of scenarios is a useful exercise. The simplest approach considers three: things stay the same, things get worse, and things get better. I would like to offer some of my own thoughts on those scenarios with the caveat that Council has not gone through this exercise and all opinions are my own.

Status Quo

The status quo is the scenario that may be easiest to address. I'll dismiss this scenario because it's not realistic. Consider the records created today that you will want to acquire for your archives. Familiar formats are being digitally transformed. Correspondence is e-mail. Diaries are now blogs. Typescripts are word processing files. Reports are Web pages. The advent of technology has fundamentally changed the nature of records and recordkeeping.

Frequently people have tried to reframe the problem. Often this approach offers some insightful and elegant solutions. However, if it is nothing more than spin, the problem will persist. For example, some records professionals try to narrow the scope of the problem by redefining what they consider to be a record. This approach simplifies the problem by reducing the number of records to manage. Unfortunately, it has the regrettable result that some interesting, valuable materials may be lost. More practically, its endorsers can't oblige others to use their definition. In many contexts, and especially in litigation, the only definition of "record" that matters is the one in the statutes.

Worst-Case Scenario

Maybe the status quo *is* the worst-case scenario. Some archivists are working hard to address the issues of digital records. Although I have often spoken of "*new* skills for a digital era," those skills are not new to a few archivists who have been working with digital materials for decades. The problem is that the skills are new to many in the profession.

[4] "As the world did not appear in the Archive's records, [archivist Jocasta Nu] instantly concluded that the planet did not exist. So reliant was she on the Jedi Archive's data, she neglected to consider that perhaps the information could have been tampered with." From *Star Wars Databank* entry "Nu, Jocasta" at http://www.starwars.com/databank/character/jocastanu/, accessed 5 November 2006.

In this bleak scenario, the archival profession fails to adapt to the digital era. Not enough archivists master the new skills. We linger before the door so long that it closes or others pass through before us and take our place. Archivists are relegated to collections of paper materials, and as more and more records are in digital format, we're largely forgotten. People looking for records don't ask for an archivist, but for someone else. I would argue that this possibility is very real. I have observed that when someone approaches an organization about records, they are often directed to an individual buried under middle management. But if they ask about electronic records, they're directed to the office of the CIO in upper management.

In a dark view of the future, records of enduring value are lost and poorly organized. Often people cannot find the records they need, and if they do, those records are hard to use, understand, or trust. We will have lost our social memory. I believe that society entrusts archivists with preserving the cultural record and our documentary heritage. If we fail to adapt to the digital era, we will necessarily fail that mandate.

Best-Case Scenario

I do not want to come across like a pessimist while talking about this worst-case scenario. While we are not condemned to this bleak future, neither are we are assured a best-case scenario

In a brighter vision of the future, society has a rich cultural record and documentary heritage because archivists have mastered the skills to thrive in the digital era. We will have passed through a variety of doors and solved the problems of selecting, acquiring, and preserving the fragile digital records that hold society's memories. These records are well organized and easy to use. We will have found a way to harness technology to do our jobs better. People use archives frequently, in part because they find it so easy to get the information they need. As important, they trust us because we offer them valuable assistance.

In this best-case scenario, no one ever asks, "What is an archivist?" because we are an integral part of people's lives. Records are more than a commodity. Archives are more than a place. Records are reliable, authentic memory ever present in people's lives. Archives are the focus of a dynamic community, connecting people to each other, to their past, and to their future.

Is this fantasy? Beth Yakel, Polly Reynolds, and the next generation finding-aid team at the University of Michigan have used a content management engine to transform an on-line collection. Patrons can add comments to the finding aid and ask the archivist questions. But they've gone a step further, with the finding aid actively suggesting relevant content based on searches, much like

Amazon.com suggests books. The collection showed potential for creating community when one patron began answering another patron's questions and suggesting other sources.[5]

Creating Our Own Scenario

No doubt the reality of the future will look different from these scenarios. The future holds a variety of outcomes for archivists and their archives. Some may find themselves in the worst case, some in the best case, and most somewhere in between.

Ultimately, these scenarios are fantasy. William Faulkner said, "The past is never dead. It's not even past."[6] We can make our own destiny. If we want to realize the best-case scenario, we will have to make choices and take responsibility for our future. We cannot be passive.

Becoming Comfortable with Digits—New Skills

To succeed, we should begin by getting a rich understanding of digital records that matches our knowledge of paper records (and to reiterate my aside, "records" include all "traditional" media and formats). Few archivists—few people—recognize that pen and paper are technologies. Because they have been surrounded by paper their entire lives and learned about it by interacting with documents innumerable times, they are unaware of the depth of this tacit knowledge. By contrast, few people are as familiar with digital technology as they are with paper. The new, digital world is virtual, not tangible. In some cases, the laws of physics no longer apply; in games we can fly, we have the power of magic, and we can command armies. I'm not sure how flying might help us with digital archives, but magic and commanding armies could really help with backlogs.

In all seriousness, we have to appreciate that the fundamental nature of records has changed in the digital environment. Fortunately, much work has been done here. Pioneers have helped map the lay of the land. Luciana Duranti mapped diplomatics onto electronic records, and the intersection of medieval and contemporary records threw many of the qualities of virtual records and recordkeeping into relief. David Levy's reflections on the future of the

[5] "The Next Generation Finding Aid: The Polar Bear Expedition Digital Collections," case study presented at the New Skills for a Digital Era colloquium, 1 June 2006, available at http://rpm.lib.az.us/newskills/CaseStudies/8_Yakel_Reynolds.pdf, accessed 25 July 2006.

[6] *Requiem for a Nun* (1951). A note of appreciation for the staff of the Phoenix Public Library for helping me locate this quote.

document in the digital era offer profound insights into how people use—and will continue to use—records.[7] But we need to translate that theoretical, academic knowledge to practical knowledge that can be applied in specific instances.

In addition to this theoretical and applied knowledge, archivists should become as comfortable working with digital records as they are working with traditional media. Instead of pen and paper, we will work with cursor and keyboard. Instead of sorters, we will work with sorting algorithms. Rather than weeding, we will filter. With few exceptions, all archivists will need what we now call technical skills as the vast majority of contemporary and future records are and will be digital. Different archivists will need different technical skills, and no archivist is likely to need all skills. But all will need some skills. Work with electronic records will not be a job for specialists as the majority of records will be digital. No doubt some archivists will continue to specialize, but their specializations will be specific to the digital arena: databases, image and audio formats, and metadata, but also user interfaces, search systems, and digital preservation.

Soft Skills

In addition to technical skills, archivists will continue to need the skills to work effectively with people. In many ways, these "soft" skills are not new. We have always needed to be able to negotiate, to communicate, to manage change, and to market our products and services. We will continue to use these skills with patrons, donors, administrators, staff, the media, and others. In the digital era, we must learn how to work with a pantheon of technologists, including network administrators, Web masters, programmers, database administrators, and more. In particular, I think we should put more emphasis on strategic thinking. What we need is a big-picture view.

In 1878, the head of Western Union declined to buy Alexander Graham Bell's patents for the telephone, and by 1910 AT&T had acquired a controlling interest in Western Union.[8] Today we live in an Amazoogle world, where people expect comprehensive information, accessible 24/7, offering immediate gratification, and customized to the consumer.[9] How should we respond so that we are remembered with the likes of Bell, rather than Western Union?

Wouldn't you like to know what role archives will play in the digital era? Looking at trends, identifying key forces, and developing scenarios will help us understand how others see us and how we can meet changing needs. However, Alane Wilson, who helped write OCLC's environmental scan, noted that

[7] David Levy, *Scrolling Forward: Making Sense of Documents in the Digital Age* (New York: Arcade, 2001).

[8] Alane Wilson, "Scanning for Planning," presented at Computers in Libraries (Washington, D.C., 2006).

[9] Coined by Lorcan Dempsey, OCLC vice president of Research.

libraries—and I suspect archives—pay less attention to these external factors, and concentrate more on internal statements of vision, mission, and goals.[10] Unless we pay attention to external factors, we may be planning for the wrong future, opening the wrong door.

Michael Stephens says librarians must sharpen their skills to respond to Web 2.0. He suggests a number of skills that I believe are essential to archivists in the digital era. We need trend spotters, who watch the horizon for any changes in the environment—often outside the world of archives—that could impact what we do and where we need to go. We need embracers, who find creative, practical uses for new technologies. We need planners and evaluators to ensure that technology meets our patrons' needs and is used appropriately.[11]

We may want to put as much emphasis on environmental scans, trend spotting, and future studies as we do on history. As I said earlier, archivists have an eye to the past and to the future, but I believe our focus belongs primarily on the future. We cannot predict the future, but we can influence it and confront it in more informed ways.

Becoming Comfortable in the Digital World—Attitudes

We need more than knowledge and skills to thrive in the digital world. We need new attitudes. A new frontier lies on the other side of the digital doorway, and it's not for the faint of heart. We need archivists who are early adopters; people who are excited, rather than intimidated, by new technology and innovations. We need risk takers; archivists who are willing to try something new and who, when confronted with failure, keep trying something over and over until they master it. We need problem solvers.

We need creativity. What could be better than living during a time of great potential? Opportunities abound for innovation in every aspect of our profession. Boxes won't help us get e-records across the archival threshold; we need new ways to transfer them. Acquisitions won't be infested with vermin, but there may be nasty viruses. Patrons may see little value in finding aids in an age of full-text searches. Digital technology creates enormous potential benefits to the profession and to our patrons. It offers us new ways to work more effectively and efficiently. To do that, we need to find new ways to do our jobs.

We need the initiative and drive—possibly impetuousness—to dive in and begin working with digital materials. We're entering risky territory, leaving the comfortable behind. We cannot wait until we have everything figured out. I

[10] Wilson, "Scanning for Planning."

[11] Michael Stephens, "Into a New World of Librarianship," part of the article "Web 2.0: Where Will It Take Libraries?" *NextSpace* 2 (2006), p. 8, available at http://www.oclc.org/nextspace/002/1.htm, accessed 24 July 2006.

didn't want to start working with electronic records because I knew there was a real chance of failure. I am enormously grateful to my friend Fynnette Eaton, who counseled me early on: "Whatever we do, we may fail; but if we do nothing, failure is guaranteed."

We may need a dose of reality now and again. Capturing snapshots from a geographic information system is not as desirable as preserving the entire system, but it's better than nothing. Capturing a PDF of a spreadsheet means that underlying formulas are lost, but it's better than nothing. Good enough is by no means our ultimate goal. We must constantly strive to do better. We need archivists who will focus on what we can do. Let us celebrate the reality of what we can accomplish, rather than bemoan the dream we did not fully realize.

As much as anything, we need patience and optimism to sustain us when the going gets rough. I encourage you to turn to your colleagues and friends in the profession. They may be the greatest source of these precious virtues when you feel overwhelmed and you find your reserves running low.

The Face of Archival Identity

I believe that the transition into the digital era will have a significant impact on the face of the profession. Many representations of Janus show one face without a beard, the other face with. He has changed; he has aged. But fundamentally, he is the same person. I believe that, like Janus, the digital archivist will look different, but will be fundamentally the same.

Archivists are doing more and more with technology, as technologists are working more and more with records. As we adapt the archival skill set to the digital era and as other disciplines address the challenge of e-records, the boundaries between the professions will blur. With all respect, is our guest, Brewster Kahle, the head of the Internet Archive, an archivist or a technologist?

We do ourselves a disservice when we try to answer this question in absolute terms. I have advocated for an inclusive definition of archivists, especially within the Society of American Archivists. We should welcome those who share and support the core principles and goals that guide our work.

- Archivists select and keep records that have enduring value as reliable memories of the past.
- We organize our collections so that the information in the records can be found and interpreted in proper context.
- We help people use and understand those records.
- We protect records from degradation, ensuring that they remain accessible over time.
- Archivists know that "what is past is prologue," that history informs and influences the future.

- We understand the importance of authenticity and trustworthiness.
- We are driven by knowledge that records play a key role in holding people and organizations accountable.

Even as the world around us changes, these principles and goals define our profession and remain unchanged.

Through the Digital Looking Glass and What Janus Found There

Embracing the new does not mean discarding the old wholesale. During the past year, I spoke with many people about my idea that *how* we do our job changes, but *what* we do remains the same. After many conversations about what we do and how we do it, I believe this idea is fundamentally correct. Catherine Stollar and Thomas Kiehne expressed it more eloquently when they said "*why* we do it will not change,"[12] stressing motivation rather than activity. Much of archival knowledge transfers directly to the digital era, and established principles give us insight into solutions.

Alien territory lies beyond the digital doorway. Each day we make choices. We are confronted with many small doors every day, and we have the opportunity to decide whether to pass through them. Many days, we choose the familiar and routine. Some days we may choose the default because we failed to see options or because we are exhausted by the pace of change. If we are to make progress, we must pass through those doors and learn about this new world. That means more than learning about information technology. It also means learning about the changed legal, business, economic, cultural, scientific, political, and social contexts of the digital era.

Feeling overwhelmed? The challenge *is* daunting. Even so, we cannot be intimidated. I encourage you by reminding you of the adage that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. We don't have to have everything figured out and planned before we start. The essence of strategic thinking is about direction, not about steps. We have a vision of where to go, and we figure out the path as we go along.

Many may feel paralyzed because they don't know what to do. The key is: We cannot let the perfect be the enemy of the possible. Ask yourself, What can I do today? No matter how small, do something. It may be as simple as accessioning a disk with word processing files. You may not know how you will keep those files accessible into the future, but at least you have them and you have a

[12] "Guarding the Guards: Archiving the Electronic Records of Hypertext Author Michael Joyce," case study presented at the New Skills for a Digital Era colloquium, 31 May–2 June 2006, National Archives and Records Administration (Washington, D.C.), 4_Stollar_Kiehne.pdf available at http://rpm.lib.az.us/NewSkills/CaseStudies.asp, accessed 17 July 2006.

chance of preserving them. Create a finding aid for the files on that disk. It may not be full text access, but you will have some means of letting your patrons know about the materials. Put a finding aid on-line so that the world knows about the collection. Start developing a plan to migrate that data and keep it alive. The more you do, the more you know. The more you know, the more you can do.

I strongly encourage you to acquire some basic, applied technical knowledge. Not so that you can build a Web site or design a database, but so that you'll have a better understanding of the digital environment. I also encourage you to hone some of those "soft" skills. Find your strengths; you may be an embracer or a trend spotter.

Remember Eaton's words: "Whatever we do, we may fail; but if we do nothing, failure is guaranteed." I offer this insight as encouragement. My sense is that many archivists fear failure. Eaton's words gave me permission to fail and gave me comfort when I did fail. But more importantly, they gave me the courage and initiative to do *something*, and without that, I would still be standing on the wrong side of the digital doorway.

Ultimately, to thrive in this world, to realize the best-case scenario, we need the spirit and attitudes of pioneers. We need the courage and—maybe more important—the *desire* to step outside our comfort zones. We need the willingness to leave what is comfortable and familiar and to pass through the doorway to the unknown. If we learn to be comfortable taking risks, we can take a leading role on the digital frontier. We can be pioneers—first through the door, scoping the terrain, and figuring out what to do next. And if we are on the leading edge, we will be better positioned to fulfill our social mandate of preserving the cultural record.

PERSPECTIVE

Universal Access to All Knowledge

Brewster Kahle

I like the idea that there's a God somewhere looking after us. But sometimes I think it's a wrathful God. Who are the right gods? Janus sounds nice, but the idea of Sisyphus having to roll a rock continuously up a hill strikes me as more appropriate. When tending files on spinning magnetic storage systems and trying to preserve them for centuries, I think of Damocles' sword hanging over us. One major slip and it could be a very, very bad day at the Archive.

I thought I'd go over some of the Internet Archive's experience working with digital materials in large numbers from an archival point of view. What are the technological issues? What are the access and use issues? What are the institutional problems and issues? What are the copyright issues? How should this all work?

I'm happy to say that after ten years of running the Internet Archive, it's all going very well.[1] In many ways, we're *cool*. The idea of archives being popular and in demand is happening in a big way. I leave from here to go to Boston to give a keynote at Wikimania. How cool is this? That we archivists have our day? This is our day—certainly for access. And, in this time of digital transition, we will discover new forms of preservation, even if not in exactly the same way we've always thought of it, as well as radically opening up our archives. This is the librarians' and the archivists' day, if we step forward and take it.

I'd like to give you an idea of some of the gritty stuff. How much does it cost? What's it like working with different organizations? Which organizations are going to do what? What about the skills required? What can we outsource, what

Brewster Kahle was invited to give a keynote address at the Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., 4 August 2006, as part of the plenary session on technology following Richard Pearce-Moses' Presidential Address. The presentations complemented each other, with Pearce-Moses touching on the challenges of the digital era and Kahle describing efforts to address those challenges at the Internet Archive.

[1] Visit the Internet Archive at www.archive.org.

can we not? What do we take in ourselves? Do we want to create a repository in one place or in lots of places? At the Internet Archive we're wrestling with these questions by just *trying* things.

We could actually make the dream of the Library of Alexandria a reality—the dream of having it all. The idea of having all published—and I'd even suggest the bulk of unpublished—things be universally accessible. In general, archivists are used to being overwhelmed. We're trying to deal with the small. What can we do a little bit more of next year? We should rethink the question. Why don't we put it *all* on-line? Sometimes it's a lot less expensive, because often the selection process is more expensive than the digitization process. And sometimes technology can help us find what we're seeking in a way that prohibitively expensive record-by-record cataloging cannot. Let me suggest some radical ways of thinking that could put the goal of universal access to all knowledge within our grasp.

The goal will not be achieved by a bunch of folks out in California. It's got to be a large-scale societal effort. Let me try to emphasize that it's actually possible. I'll be emphasizing published materials, even though I realize I'm in a room full of archivists.

Let's start with text. How hard is it to bring printed materials, whether bound or unbound, on-line on a large scale? Well, we started to look around. How big is the task? Take the largest library collection of published materials, the Library of Congress, which I understand holds between 26 and 28 million bound volumes in its collections. If you take the text of a book and digitize it in Microsoft Word format, it's about a megabyte. If a book is about a megabyte, 26 million books is 26 million megabytes. The units go mega, giga, tera, so it would take 26 terabytes to store all the words in the Library of Congress. In current terms, that's a computer that's about the size of this podium and costs about $60,000. So for $60,000 you could buy a computer system that could store all the words in all the books of the Library of Congress. Pretty cool. So for much less than the cost of a house, you can have the Library of Congress. Or in California, you could have a garage, or a really nice rose garden, or a parking space. But it's within our grasp to talk about having all the words in the Library of Congress on spinning storage that could be accessible from a large number of places. So then, the question is, "How do we get it there?"

It is a little bit more difficult to go through and image every one of those pages and then run them through optical character recognition (OCR), but even that process is getting much, much cheaper. If we add OCR, we end up with books that are searchable so that you can go and find things within a book, rather than just finding the catalog record or a picture of a page. Books are starting to appear on the Net with little tabs: If you search for "Boston" in a given book, these little tabs say "look here" and highlight the text.

After digitizing, we can do other things that we couldn't do before. One thing is the ability to deliver paper materials to people remotely. Take the

archives' and the libraries' stuff, digitize it and put it on the Net, and then turn it back into paper. Maybe I'm a little old- fashioned, but I like books. The idea of actually delivering books to people is, I think, a good thing. It isn't that hard to build a whole print-on-demand bookmobile. You can actually do it in a little van with a satellite dish, a printer, a binder, and a book cutter. Kids can actually print their own books. Turns out if you're printing a hundred-page book—okay that's not a very big book—but a hundred-page book costs a buck. A dollar a book to print and bind for the paper, toner, and cover. That's not the capital costs and that's not the labor, but for a buck a book you can afford to give away books. Which is kind of nice in the sense that you don't have to give out the only copy that you have. I think of the librarian's dilemma, wondering every time somebody walks out the door with a book, "Is it going to come back?" If we have the ability to print on demand, we can get around that particular problem.

Other people are doing this. Eric Eldred, the guy who[2] got to the Supreme Court challenging the copyright term extension, has his own bookmobile. There are bookmobiles in India, Egypt, and Uganda. We found out that this technology worked quite well for printing and binding in the field.

We also found out that there weren't enough good books. The real challenge is to go back and scan these materials so we can make them available to be distributed this way. We started with out-of-copyright materials to assess the institutional responsibilities, such as, "Who can do what?" And "Who *should* be doing what?" And "How much does it *really* cost?" What we found is that if you ship your books to India, it costs about ten dollars to scan one book. That's not too bad.

Unfortunately, a lot of people don't like sending their books to India. We sent 100,000 books to India, and we haven't gotten them back yet. It's not a problem with the Indians, it's this whole coordination thing. People generally don't want to send their books out of house. The Library of Alexandria in Egypt is starting to do in-library scanning. They've scanned about 20,000 books. The idea of scanning inside libraries made a lot of sense, so we tried out some robotic technologies. We found out they weren't reliable. And they were quite expensive. The experience foretells good things for these advanced technologies in the future, but we found that going back and doing a simpler system—manual page turning—was easier. So we developed our own little book scanner to get the cost per page—if you were to scan inside the United States—down to ten cents. It holds the books in a cradle and is nondestructive. It uses glass to flatten the page to get really good images, 300 dots per inch at a minimum, but more likely 500 or 600 dpi with the current digital cameras. So, at ten cents a page, if it's a three-hundred page book, it's about $30 a book. If you're trying to do a million books—which is a lot—it's $30 million. Which is more than I happen to have at the moment. But that figure is not that large by the total economics of

[2] 537 US Supreme Court 186, *Eldred et al. v. John D. Ashcroft, Attorney General,* 15 January 2003.

what our institutions spend. In the United States, libraries and archives are a $12-billion-a-year industry. So, if it's $30 million to scan a million books, you can imagine starting to think large.

We've started to build these scanning stations and put them into partner libraries, including the University of Toronto and the University of California. We'll be going into the Boston Library Consortium, the Boston Public Library, and a number of other places as well. We'll be like an in-house service bureau. They could have done it themselves, but they actually wanted an in-house service bureau at ten cents a page. That's been working out very well, and we've been getting sponsorship from Yahoo! and Microsoft to digitize these materials in such a way that they're openly accessible, as opposed to digitization that goes into just a single commercial company's offerings as we've seen in some other projects. I think we've got some opportunities to get sponsorship or support for the early days, but in general it's going to be our responsibility to bring some of these collections forward. I would suggest that the cost of digitizing some 26 million books, at $30 a book—even if it were all done in the United States—is $750 million. It doesn't have to be done all in one year, but in time we could get all the books of the Library of Congress scanned and put on-line. Pretty neat. It's doable.

We started doing some work with the University of North Carolina, testing digitizing single pages, such as loose-leaf papers. We're still in the early stages to see if we can get that cost down to ten cents a page and do really high-quality imaging. In some ways, this project is reminiscent of microfilm, but with color, better resolution, and better accessibility.

So, audio. If we're trying to do the same thing with our audio collections, how much is there? As best we can tell, two to three million disks, 78s, long-playing records, and CDs have been published. Again, a couple of these podiums full of computers would do it; it's not that much stuff. The question is, "*Can* we do these sorts of things?"

We're working in a fairly litigious environment, especially in the published music area. However, we've found that a lot of communities aren't served very well by the current publishing industry. Niches of people who live by their music—people who aren't Madonna or Nirvana—have an interest in getting their music up and out. We made an offer to musical communities to host their materials. We provide unlimited storage, unlimited bandwidth, forever, for free, for those who want to share materials that, broadly defined, belong in a library. Lots of people are taking us up on that offer. They like the longevity of being archived. They also like the savings in bandwidth bills.

In this country, it generally doesn't cost you to give something away. If you give something to the public or to a charity, not only do you not get taxed for it, you get a pat on the back and a tax deduction. Except on the Internet. If you put something really popular up on the Internet, and it gets blogged, and somehow

it becomes very popular, your bandwidth bill from your ISP can go through the roof. And you could go broke. This makes no sense. The idea that it costs people to give things away makes no sense at a societal level. So, we in the library and archives world, I think, have a role to play. Let's provide room on our shelves for those who want to provide these things. They'll do a whole heck of a lot of work cataloging and doing all sorts of interesting things to make these works available. They'll do a lot of work for us if we do this *quid pro quo.*

The community of rock-and-rollers really took us up on our offer. In the rock-and-roll world, the Grateful Dead started a tradition of allowing people to record their concerts and pass around their tapes as long as no one makes any money. The key is: No one makes any money. You're allowed to pass around the tapes. Lots of bands copied them. Thousands of bands copied them. There's a whole community of people who trade concert recordings—bootlegs. When the Internet came along, they started trading over the Internet. We went to this community and said, "Would you like unlimited storage, and unlimited bandwidth, forever, for free?" They wrote back, "We don't believe you." So we said, "Try us—we know how to do big servers." People have been uploading their musical recordings. We went back to the bands and asked permission. Because trading tapes is different from putting something on a Web site, we went back to the bands and asked, "Is it okay to make this available?" The key thing we heard back from them was, "Are you going to make any money off it?" We said, "No. We're a nonprofit; we have no ads, no nothing." And they said, "Okay. Good. Let's give this a shot." Now we have over two thousand bands and over thirty thousand concert recordings. We have everything the Grateful Dead ever did. All these recordings are available on the Internet Archive, and it's providing both preservation and access to a type of material that was very difficult to get to before.

So the audio collections are small enough that we can do the whole thing. Audio, I would suggest, is within our grasp. We're not technologically limited. It's finding the niches that really make sense at this particular time that's the key component. And then, there are the rights issues, but I won't go into that much.

Within your collections, I'll bet you have a lot of audio recordings. It costs about $10 to digitize a long-playing record if you do them in bulk. That's not too bad. It costs quite a bit more if you're dealing with old tapes. But if you're dealing with relatively modern tapes and you can go through them without restoration, you can do it in bulk. Look into making your audio collections available. It's worth putting them out there.

We've also found that if you put things out there in a nonprofit setting, it works for people in the sense that they don't gripe. The idea of opt-out as opposed to opt-in—putting it up and then if somebody complains, taking it down—works very well in these sorts of communities. I would suggest being a bit bold and making things available, as Richard Pearce-Moses is coaching us to do.

Now, moving images. How many are there? If you take the Hollywood films, theatrical releases, I'm told there are between one and two hundred thousand. That's the universe of works designed for theatrical release. These works are quite heavily mined and used, so the rights issues are pretty thorny. We could get about six hundred works up on the Web site because the copyright registration lapsed. They're in DVD format, as well as other lower-resolution formats. Lots of old Westerns and so on; they're quite popular.

What we've found, actually, is that the archival films are a really big boon for us. I was introduced to Rick Prelinger, who runs one of the largest private film libraries, and we did a collaboration where the Internet Archive paid for the digitization of his top thousand films and put them up on the Internet for free. He supported himself from his library, and he found his business did better. People continued to go back to Getty Images[3] and pay fees to be able to get to his works, even though these same works were available on the Net. He expanded the program to two thousand films.

We're finding that lots and lots of people, untraditional people, are using our archives in ways that we've never imagined before. This stuff is popular. We've gotten over two million downloads just this year from just the Prelinger collection. Two million! And they're using them in untraditional ways. They're making mash-ups and other fun things. They're making new music videos. They're learning from them. We're injecting the past into the present in an interesting and accessible way to millions of people.

So, it's all working, both from a business model sense and a cost sense. We've gotten digitization down to about $15 per video hour. We helped put a guy in business based on $15 an hour. Almost all of us have cupboards full of videotapes; if you just send them to this guy, he'll put them on-line for $15 per video hour. It's cheap. Right? You can get a thousand hours done for $15,000. And we'll do all the hosting. So the cost of doing bulk digitization of video is quite inexpensive. We've even done some with 35 mm films, and that's on the order of $100, $150 per hour. Again, doable. Is this perfect restoration? No. But it's great access.

Take television. We estimate about four hundred channels of television. We've been archiving twenty channels of television twenty-four hours a day at DVD quality. It is like a big TiVo box, if you will. We hit the record button and started recording twenty channels, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Iraqi, Al Jazeera, BBC, NBC, CBS, ABC. For a couple of years, we've only made one week available, 11 September through 18 September 2001. It was the news from around the world, what the world saw. We put that out one month after September 11th. So the idea of taking our archives and injecting them back into the common discourse immediately is within our grasp because of this

[3] See http://gettyimages.mediaroom.com/index.php?s=company_overview, accessed 22 January 2007.

technological capability. Collecting on the large scale of television is also within our grasp, even in terms of the finances of small organizations such as ours.

We've found that there's a real growth in new types of movies. Because people have cell phones and video cameras, they're doing different kinds of movies. Again, we've offered free hosting for them. We've been getting all sorts of things. There's this whole Lego community (who would have thought?) that makes movies with Legos as actors. You know, still cameras and sound effects. Some of these are cool. Some are terrible. But they're small, and it's easy to help support that community, as well as a lot of political videos that are now being put up on the Net. We're starting to get large numbers of universities putting out their archives of lectures. What a great thing. So a kid in Uganda who's a real math whiz could start to learn from the great university lectures. Isn't that right? If it cost $15 a video hour, why not? So I would say that video is also doable.

We've been working on software as well. We believe there are only approximately thirty thousand titles. Most of the issues in their preservation pertain to law and policy. Technical issues include how to emulate the old platforms. Some of the best archival work is being done by underground communities that support gaming. We can help those guys by giving them an umbrella to work under.

I've tried to look at these different media and show that they can be brought on-line. We're probably best known for our Web collection. We have 55 billion Web pages. We take a snapshot of the Web every two months. It's a full public snapshot of the Web since 1996. We can show you what Yahoo! looked like in 1996. Or Pets.com. In fact, most people use our Wayback Machine to look at their old stuff. We get a couple hundred thousand users a day, which we're very proud of.

Preservation

How do we preserve *and* facilitate access to the materials? That is a real problem. If there's one lesson from the first library of Alexandra—which is probably best known for burning—it's "don't have just one copy." Living on the San Andreas Fault line in San Francisco, we're aware of what can happen. As a result, we've built relationships with other organizations and are giving copies of the things that are most precious to us to people who are as far away and as different from us as we could find. A copy of the Internet Archive is at the new Library of Alexandria in Egypt. We've given a copy of our collections to them, and they're giving a copy of their collections to us. We've also started the same kind of thing in Amsterdam.

So preservation means "make copies." It may be the best way to start. There's a lot of hand wringing. You're going to lose stuff. So go and put things in other people's hands who are friends enough that you can go to them and say, "Mind if I get a copy of that back?" These digital technologies erode very

quickly. The current digital technologies only last about three years. In the last ten years, we've moved—transitioned—our materials three times. It's painful. And lossy. It's very difficult. We're in the process of doing it again right now. So I would suggest you put it under different administrations so that they'll have different faults than you do. At some point, maybe there will be some digital technologies that work for the long term. But demands that technology companies think about what we archivists need are unlikely to be heeded. They're going for the commercial sectors. They don't really care about the longevity of this stuff. They just want to get their Microsoft Word documents fast. So we get to suffer and use these technologies as best we can. Copying things forward within our own organizations is key. The other is making copies in far away places.

Access

We've tried different access methods. I've said we've gotten a couple hundred thousand users a day, which is pretty good. It should be more. We've put the Wayback Machine up, and you can go and see old Web pages. We've tried some different search services that use time-graphs on top showing the frequency of use of particular words that you're using. I think time-based search is going to be pretty interesting as a mechanism to bring broader access to these materials.

Will we live up to this opportunity? I don't know. A bunch of us are really throwing ourselves at it. We're trying really hard. But it's got to be a much broader effort. We really need help. We want it to be in the public sector for all the reasons of longevity and openness. If you could help, that would be fantastic. If we can help you, that would be fantastic. It's not as hard as you might think. It's not as costly as you might think. One of the key areas is to be bold and try things.

What are some of the issues? The network layer is kind of working, and we have some issues at the software layer. We're facing unknowns at the content layer. Will the future of these libraries and archives be public or private? Is it going to be Elseviers, ProQuests, and Googles, or is it going to be the Library of Congress, NARA, the Internet Archive, and similar places that will really provide the service layers to get to collections? It's a big unknown right now. I think there's definitely a role for the commercial guys. But libraries and archives really have to keep our roles whole and moving forward because we have a very different point of view than the commercial guys. Will access be open or proprietary? Will it all go under digital rights management, or are we going to help push some of these systems to be more open to fulfill the democratic ideals that are baked into our profession? I'd say those are a couple of the big, open questions that we haven't figured out even as the technologies are moving along.

One organization that might help is the Open Content Alliance.[4] It's an organization of technology companies and libraries that is working on the issues of dealing with rights to our holdings. How do we build joint collections with joint service models that make sense so that people don't have to poke into every random archives server? We can have joint collections that users can search in groups so that people can get what they're looking for without having archives and libraries feel like they've sold out. How do we strike that balance? The Open Content Alliance is attempting to achieve it.

In conclusion, I argue for universal access to all knowledge. I argue that it is within our grasp financially. It's within our grasp technologically. It's within our grasp politically. It's a great project to work on. In many ways, we've been working on it for centuries. It's a project in many ways we're *all* working on. Technologies make it possible to do things that, with paper, were very, very difficult. Universal access to all knowledge is possible, and I'd say it could be measured as one of the great achievements of humankind, along with putting a man on the moon or assembling the Library of Alexandria. I think our generation could bring universal access to all knowledge, and that's something we'd be proud of for centuries.

[4] See http:// www.opencontentalliance.org/, accessed 22 January 2007.

Visual Archives in Perspective: Enlarging on Historical Medical Photographs

Jeffrey Mifflin

Abstract

Examining historical photographs can open paths to improved understanding of the history of most disciplines, including medicine. Images can be "read" and advantageously integrated with other historical "traces." Documents, including photographs, are "orphaned" when separated from their creators and used out of context. Archivists share with historians the responsibility for considering interpretations of the documentary record. Cultivating subject-specific understanding as well as general historical awareness expands our competency to read photographs and promotes more contextualized and historically grounded uses of information.

Approaching Photographs and History

Josiah Johnson Hawes painstakingly exposed daguerreotypes of early ether operations at the Massachusetts General Hospital in the spring of 1847. Half a century later, a reporter for the *Boston Weekly Transcript* interviewed the aged photographic pioneer in his Boston home. He displayed his personal collection of daguerreotypes to the reporter, including many portraits of prominent figures and one scene depicting the administration of anesthesia. He handled them "tenderly, almost reverently," the reporter observed. "One can see how the thoughts of other days fill his mind as he looks them over."[1]

Historical photographs are fertile, underused, and vulnerable to misinterpretation. They are, perhaps, the most immediate and affecting "traces"[2] of the past that we have, evoking "thoughts of other days" in nearly every viewer. This

[1] "A Famous Boston Studio," *Boston Weekly Transcript*, 30 July 1897, 3.

[2] Some historians suggest replacing the term *source* with the less loaded term *trace*, referring to any trace of the past found in the present, including printed books, manuscripts, artifacts, and images. One way of looking at the documentation represented by historical photographs is that they are "fragments," which, in conjunction with other fragments of evidence, other traces, can be assembled into broader and deeper constructions of historical knowledge. Elizabeth Edwards, ed., *Anthropology and Photography, 1860–1920*

article explores historical photography through a few selected aspects of the history of medical photography, offering general observations and a factual framework intended to aid interpretation, identify pitfalls, and encourage archivists to assume a role more active than that of passive preserver and processor of documents.[3] The photographic reproductions accompanying this article are not directly correlated to the text, although a careful "reading" of them illuminates many of the points discussed herein. Captions call attention to observations and background information derived from research in written sources, conversations with expert informants, and visual literacy, a process similar to the in-depth, on-site reference interactions encouraged in the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) Archives and Special Collections.

Historians build meanings by using traces of past events to interpret what happened in the past. The "possibility of history" is tied to the survival of such traces and our ability to read them.[4] Historians are expected to be careful about how raw materials are chosen and interpreted and have cultivated techniques for judging how authentic, representative, or relevant such materials are. "They have constructed typologies of sources, . . .dividing them into genres that lend themselves to systematic comparative analyses, and they have invented ingenious strategies for decoding and interpreting sources. . . .The historian's basic task is to choose reliable sources, to read them reliably, and to put them together in ways that provide reliable narratives about the past."[5]

Photographs have long been used to illustrate works overwhelmingly based on textual resources. More recently the photograph in its own right has proven its worth. Its proper place and most informed use is in context with other materials, integrated into a network of related historical traces,[6] often including

1860–1920 (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992), 5. Peter Burke explained that, "Traditionally historians have referred to their documents as 'sources,' as if they were filling their buckets from the stream of Truth, their stories becoming increasingly pure as they moved closer to the origins. . . , implying the possibility of an account of the past which is uncontaminated by intermediaries. It is, of course, impossible to study the past without the assistance of a whole chain of intermediaries, including not only earlier historians but also the archivists who arranged the documents, the scribes who wrote them and the witnesses whose words were recorded." *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2001), 13. This article will adopt use of the term *trace* in preference to *source,* with the understanding that traces of the past must be used whenever possible in conjunction and in comparison with one another to approximate an overall picture of past events, drawn from individual points of data and carefully considered lines of evaluation.

[3] Archival photographs are those with continuing usefulness, regardless of whether or not they are in an archival repository.

[4] Eduardo Cadava, *Words of Light: Theses on the Photography of History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), 64.

[5] Martha Howell and Walter Preventier, *From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2001), 1–2.

[6] For the problems (and advantages) associated with mixed collections of documents, artifacts, paintings, photographs, etc., see Jeffrey Mifflin, "Archivists and Artifacts: The Custodianship of Objects in an Archival Setting," *Archival Elements: Newsletter of the Science, Technology, and Healthcare Roundtable of the Society of American Archivists* (June 2003); and Jeffrey Mifflin, "Starting a Hospital Archives and Records Management Program:

complementary texts, and sometimes artifacts, oral testimony, sound recordings, films, and videotapes. Consumers would do well to ask how the interpretation of photographic traces is supported, furthered, contradicted, or confirmed by exploring them in conjunction with evidence gleaned from artifacts, oral statements, or written documents.[7]

Photographs are created by the convergence of photographer, subject, camera, and other variables, such as who is or isn't present, and the authority or influence they may have. The overall situation, as well as technology, frames the result. Angle, lens, speed of plate or film, moment chosen, and length of exposure shape what the camera records.[8] Today, because we are surrounded by photographs, and technologies that make distorting and altering photographic images easy and relatively undetectable,[9] we no longer consider them definitive truth-containing artifacts,[10] as did Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes. Holmes (professor of anatomy and physiology at Harvard Medical School, 1847 to 1882) was so impressed by the verisimilitude of stereographs that he argued for the establishment of national or city libraries to maintain them.[11]

A Case Study," *Records and Information Management Report* 21, no. 10 (December 2005): 1–13. See also Ala Rekut, "Material Literacy: Reading Records as Material Culture," a paper read at the First International Conference on the History of Records and Archives (I-CHORA), 2–4 October 2003.

[7] As historian of science Adrian Johns recently pointed out as chair of a conference session entitled "Science as News," discriminating consumers of information "compare." They "triangulate" between different types of resources or media to arrive at what they think is the truth. Such resources often include books, the print media, television, the Internet, listservs, and word of mouth. Annual Meeting, History of Science Society, 23 November 2004, Cambridge, Mass.

[8] It is not possible in a short article to define and describe the myriad processes used in photography over the last 168 years. Important considerations related to the capabilities and limitations of specific photographic technologies and how they affect the resulting images have not been discussed in detail in this article, but will be addressed in a longer work currently in preparation. On processes and identification of types of photographs, see William Crawford, *The Keepers of Light: A History and Working Guide to Early Photographic Processes* (Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.: Morgan and Morgan, 1979). See also James M. Reilly, *Care and Identification of 19th-Century Photographic Prints* (Rochester, N.Y.: Eastman Kodak Co., 1986). For general information about photographic archives, see Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler, Gerald J. Munoff, and Margery S. Long, *Archives and Manuscripts: Administration of Photographic Collections* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1984), now superseded by Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler and Diane Vogt O'Connor, *Photographs: Archival Care and Management* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2006). Useful advice about arrangement and description is found in Bernadette Callery and Deborah Wythe, "Photographs," in *Museum Archives: An Introduction*, ed. Deborah Wythe, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2004), 123–140. George Eastman House maintains a database of historical photographers that can help with attribution of images. See www.geh.org (accessed 11 May 2006).

[9] For discussion of concerns about new technology and alteration of photographs, see Elisabeth Parinet, "Diplomatics and Institutional Photos," *American Archivist* 59 (Fall 1996): 480–85. For further consideration of what constitutes authenticity in a photograph and how diplomatics can orient archivists to such questions, see Nancy Bartlett, "Diplomatics for Photographic Images: Academic Exoticism?" *American Archivist* 59 (Fall 1996): 486–94.

[10] A useful survey of early critical writing about photographs as "reliable and authentic evidence of some external reality" is Joan M. Schwartz, " 'Records of Simple Truth and Precision': Photography, Archives, and the Illusion of Control," *Archivaria* 50 (Spring 2000): 1–40.

[11] See Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Stereoscope and the Stereograph," in *Classic Essays on Photography*, ed. Alan Trachtenberg (New Haven, Conn.: Lette's Island Books, 1980), 71–82; and Oliver Wendell

Photographs have a remarkable potential for being exploited to various ends. A principal danger in using photographs as historical traces is inherent in the possibilities of dislocation in time and space.[12] Context can provide an anchor that may not be otherwise available, a hedge against error, discouraging the superimposition of meanings. Martha Sandweiss explained that audiences often encounter photographs in such contexts as albums, scrapbooks, studio windows, public lectures, and advertisements. When they are "wrenched from the context of their original presentation" and added to a repository, a viewer's ability to understand them is "diminished."[13] *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology*, published by the Society of American Archivists, acknowledges the importance of such stabilizing associations in its definition of "photographic archives," which begins with the phrase "a collection of photographs, often with accompanying materials in other formats."[14]

As Brian Wallis warned, the "notion of an autonomous image is a fiction."[15] The best contemporary thinking about the nature of visual images recognizes, according to Joan Schwartz, that they

> carry important social consequences and that the facts they transmit in visual form must be understood in social space and real time. . . .This focus on context. . . not only connects the concerns of users of archives to the aims of

Holmes, "Doings of the Sunbeam," *Atlantic Monthly* 12 (July 1863): 1–15. See also Stanley B. Burns, "Early Medical Photography in America (1839–1883): II. Physicians and Early Photography," *New York State Journal of Medicine* (May 1979): 945–46.

[12] Note that many medical photographic collections developed in ways best described as "artificial" rather than "organic." One, focusing exclusively on historical material, is the Burns Archive in New York, which licenses selected images from its collections on its Web site at http://www.burnsarchive.com/archive/medical.html, accessed 11 May 2006. Others include the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, the National Library of Medicine, the Center for the History of Medicine at Harvard Medical School's Francis A. Countway Library, and the Chesney Medical Archives at Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions. Harvard's on-line "Visual Information Access" database at http://via.harvard.edu:9080/via/deliver/advancedsearch?_collection=via (accessed 11 May 2006) contains many medical images spread out over the university's numerous repositories. The "Related Work" field of the database (not filled in for every image) is especially valuable. See also Harvard's Oasis database at http://oasis.harvard.edu:10080/oasis/deliver/advancedsearch?_collection=oasis, accessed 11 May 2006. A useful print resource for American medical images is *Illustrated Catalogue of the Slide Archive of Historical Medical Photographs at Stony Brook*, compiled by Rima Apple (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984), which describes and indexes 3,016 photographs and lists repositories known to have significant collections. But note that use of on-line images or, for that matter, other out-of-context reproductions, cannot replace a close examination of originals and associated documentation.

[13] Martha A. Sandweiss, *Photography in Nineteenth-Century America* (Fort Worth, Tex.: Amon Carter Museum; New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1991), ix. It is worth noting that archivists are usually better at preserving the context, or information about the context, of an accession than are museum personnel, who are more inclined to treat an accession as an individual item that can be appreciated on the basis of its own merits.

[14] Richard Pearce-Moses, *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005), 295.

[15] Brian Wallis, "Black Bodies, White Science," *American Art* 9 (Summer 1995): 40. He goes on to explain that photographs that once circulated out of family albums, desk drawers, etc., have often been "displaced" to the "unifying context of the art museum."

> keepers of archives, but also shows that archival description cannot proceed from surface content alone. . . .Our job is to seek their intended function or role—be it personal, social, political, or economic—as a means of communicating a message across time and/or space and then to consider how to preserve and describe them in a way that respects, reveals, and retains their impact on human relations, power, and knowledge.[16]

A number of historians[17] and educators in visual anthropology,[18] as well as archivists,[19] have discussed the pitfalls and opportunities that photographs present when mined for historical purposes.

The most frequently used guides about how to manage an archival program in a hospital setting briefly mention photographs, but do not discuss their collection or use in any detail. Joan Krizack pointed to photographs as useful components of documentation strategy for health care systems.[20] Nancy McCall and Lisa Mix alluded (briefly, in captions) to the importance and usefulness of historical medical photographs.[21] Barbara L. Craig listed photographs of colleagues,

[16] Joan M. Schwartz, "Negotiating the Visual Turn: New Perspectives on Images and Archives," *American Archivist* 67 (Spring/Summer 2004): 110. See also Joan Schwartz, " 'We make our tools and our tools make us': Lessons from Photographs for the Practice, Politics, and Poetics of Diplomatics," *Archivaria* 40 (Fall 1995): 40–74.

[17] See, for example, Marsha Peters and Bernard Mergen, " 'Doing the Rest': The Uses of Photographs in American Studies," *American Quarterly* 29 (Summer 1977): 280–303. See also Jennifer Tucker, "The Historian, the Picture, and the Archive," *Isis* 97 (March 2006): 111–20.

[18] See, notably, Edwards, *Anthropology and Photography;* and Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology, and Museums* (Oxford: Berg, 2001). Edwards's special interest is the relationship between photographic practices and cultural representation, especially in anthropological records. The journal *Visual Anthropology* is also a fertile resource for discussions on many aspects of visual literacy.

[19] Good general advice for archivists working with historical photographs appears in an article by Elisabeth Kaplan and Jeffrey Mifflin, " 'Mind and Sight': Visual Literacy and the Archivist," in *American Archival Studies: Theory and Practice,* ed. Randall C. Jimerson (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2000), first published in *Archival Issues* 21, no. 2 (1996): 107–27. See also Normand Charbonneau, "The Selection of Photographs," *Archivaria* 59 (Spring 2005): 119–38; Jim Burant, "Visual Archives and the Writing of Canadian History," *Archivaria* 54 (Fall 2002): 115–17; Richard Noble, "Considerations for Evaluating Local History Photographs," *Picturescope* 31, no. 1 (1983): 17–20; Richard Rudisill, "On Reading Photographs," *Journal of American Culture* 5 (Fall 1982): 1–14; and Thomas Schlereth, "Mirrors of the Past: Historical Photography and American History," in *Artifacts and the American Past* (Nashville, Tenn.: American Association for State and Local History, 1980). Articles by Joan Schwartz have effectively mined and interpreted historical photographs in addition to providing a coherent theoretical overview. See, for example, Joan Schwartz, " 'Records of Simple Truth and Precision': Photography, Archives, and the Illusion of Control," *Archivaria* 50 (Fall 2000): 1–40; "Photographic Record of Pre-Confederation British Columbia," *Archivaria* 5 (Winter 1977–78): 17–44; and " 'We make our tools and our tools make us.' " Some general suggestions for further reading are brought together in Richard Pearce-Moses, ed., *A Visual Materials Bibliography* at http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/byauth/pearce-moses/vismat.html (accessed 11 May 2006). The Web site maintained by the Prints and Photographs Division of the U.S. Library of Congress contains a good general bibliography about photographs, which includes a section on "Picture Research and Visual Literacy" at http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/resource/vmbib.html (accessed 11 May 2006). See also *Views: The Newsletter of the Visual Materials Section of the Society of American Archivists* at http://www.lib.lsu.edu/SAA/views.html, accessed 5 October 2006.

[20] Joan Krizack, *Documentation Planning for the U.S. Health Care System* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).

[21] Nancy McCall and Lisa Mix, *Designing Archival Programs to Advance Knowledge in the Health Fields* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995). Sample captions include: "When it is impractical

offices, equipment, consulting rooms, buildings, staff, events, and clinical work as being among "types of materials which are usually of long term value."[22] The multivolume *Bibliography of the History of Medicine*, compiled by the National Library of Medicine, lists a number of books and articles useful for multifaceted consideration of the place of photographs in medical history,[23] but *Morton's Medical Bibliography* (a classic reference tool) indicates only two books considered important in the history of medicine because of their use of photographs.[24]

Craig, in discussing hospital historiography, pointed out that some social historians of medicine have recently challenged "almost exclusive reliance on. . .administrative records and published reports" because of the "often intractable nature of records" that don't "respond to current questioning."[25] Providing an effective example of the possibilities of such an approach, she and Gordon Dodds published a selection of historical medical photographs as "independent documents supported by captions." They hoped thereby to "interest others in pursuing a similar approach to historical themes and that the unique archival value of photographs as evidence will encourage a catholic appraisal of these documents within the sphere of medical history."[26] Historical medical photographs can contribute much to our understanding of people, situations, and relationships not addressed by materials such as letters, diaries, administrative records, and journal articles. If analyzed and used with appropriate cautions, they can express elements of the history of medicine that are "rarely disclosed" elsewhere.[27]

to preserve examples of large-scale equipment, photographs may serve as substitute documentation" (210). "Photographs are a major source for studying the evolution of laboratory practices" (193). "Visual documentation constitutes a major source for studying the activities of teaching, health care, and research" (191). "Photographs of patients and specimens [are] a significant part of visual documentation. . . . The intellectual and physical control of visual documentation presents many new challenges to archival management in the health fields" (99). "Visual documentation is also a major resource for the study of socioeconomic conditions at health care institutions" (23).

[22] Barbara L. Craig, *Medical Archives: What They Are and How to Keep Them, an Introduction and Some Basic Advice for Individuals and Institutions*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Associated Medical Services, 2000), 36.

[23] National Library of Medicine, *Bibliography of the History of Medicine* (Bethesda, Md.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, National Institutes of Health, National Library of Medicine, 1964–1993). See also Carl Spadoni, "Medical Archives: An Annotated Bibliography," *Archivaria* 28 (Summer 1989): 74–119; and Geoffrey Reaume and Barbara L. Craig, "Medical Archives: An Update of the Spadoni Bibliography, 1986–1995," *Archivaria* 41 (Spring 1990): 121-57.

[24] Jeremy M. Norman, ed., *Morton's Medical Bibliography: An Annotated Check-list of Texts Illustrating the History of Medicine (Garrison and Morton)*, 5th ed. (Aldershot, U.K.: Scolar Press, 1991), 766–67.

[25] Barbara L. Craig, "The Canadian Hospital in History and Archives," *Archivaria* 21 (Winter 1985–86): 56.

[26] Barbara L. Craig and Gordon Dodds, "The Picture of Health," *Archivaria* 10 (Summer 1980): 192. A similar approach was effectively adopted in Janet Golden and Charles E. Rosenburg, *Picture of Health: A Photographic History of Health Care in Philadelphia, 1860–1945* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991). See also Jacalyn Duffin, "Medicine through the Lens of a Camera," *Queen's Quarterly* 98, no. 4 (Winter 1991): 865–73.

[27] Rima D. Apple, "Picturing the Hospital: Photographs in the History of an Institution," in *The American General Hospital: Communities and Social Contexts*, ed. Diana E. Long and Janet Golden (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989), 68.

Advantages and Limits of Imaging Technologies

Nineteenth-century attempts to draw what the microscope revealed were often inaccurate because of "imagination and taste" that never failed to influence "the pencil."[28] The 1839 announcement of photography's invention by Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre in France was quickly followed by its use in conjunction with microscopes. The first known medical photographs were daguerreian photomicrographs (daguerreotypes exposed through the lens of a microscope, depicting micro-organisms) taken by Dr. Alfred Donné in France in 1839.[29] Medical practitioners were entranced by the supposed accuracy of magnified images captured on daguerreotype plates and the engravings based on them.[30] According to philosopher Michel Foucault, the nineteenth-century transition to modern medicine was characterized by increased faith in visual evidence.[31]

Early uses of photography in medicine were limited by the available photographic technology. For example, photomicrographs could be and were taken using the daguerreotype process, but this required long exposures. Calotypes (a paper-based process announced by William Henry Fox Talbot in England at about the same time that Daguerre revealed his silvered copperplate process) were not suitable for use with the microscope because the coarseness of the paper made microscopic details unreadable. Frederick Scott Archer's development of the wet collodion process (wet plates) in 1851 enabled faster speeds for microscopy and other applications, but preparing the glass plates, which had to be sensitized on the spot and developed soon after, was a messy task fraught with difficulty.[32]

Not surprisingly, doctors were pioneers in the refinement of early photographic technology and the application thereof to scientific purposes, such as microscope work, or creating a photographic record of clinical events.[33] Richard

[28] Dionysis Lardner, *The Museum of Science and Art*, vol. 6 (London, 1855), as quoted in Bates Lowry and Isabel Barrett Lowry, *The Silver Canvas* (Los Angeles: Getty Museum, 1998), 102–3. Lardner was a central figure in mid–nineteenth-century publication projects aimed at bringing easily digested scientific knowledge to the general public at affordable prices. See also James A. Secord, *Victorian Sensation: The Extraordinary Publication, Reception, and Secret Authorship of 'Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation'* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 50–51.

[29] Stanley B. Burns, "Early Medical Photography in America (1839–1883): VII. American Medical Publications with Photographs," *New York State Journal of Medicine* (July 1981): 1245.

[30] Lowry, *The Silver Canvas*, 102–3.

[31] Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic* (New York: Vintage Books, 1975), 107, passim.

[32] Burns, "Early Medical Photography in America (1839-1883): III. The Daguerrean Era," *New York State Journal of Medicine* (July 1979): 1264. On photomicrography see Stanley Klosevych, "Progress in the Science of Photography through the Microscope," *Journal of the Biological Photographic Association* 35, no. 3 (August 1967): 130–42.

[33] See George Rosen, ed., "Medicine and Early Photography," *Ciba Symposia* 4 (August–September 1942): 1330–59. See also Burns, "Early Medical Photography" II, 943–47; and M. L. Verso, "Doctors and Daguerreotypes: Contributions of Medical Men to the History of Photography," *The Victorian Historical Magazine: Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria* 40, nos. 1 and 2 (February/May 1969): 23–44.

Maddox, a physician whose special interest was photomicrography, was instrumental in 1871 in developing dry plates, glass negative plates coated with gelatino-bromide solution allowed to dry before use. Unlike wet plates, they could be stored in readiness until needed. By 1878, improvements to the dry plate allowed medical photographs to be taken at a speed of 1/25 second. Medical journals in the 1880s carried articles about the sundry new applications of photography to medical practice.[34] The first textbook on medical photography (*La Photographie Médicale)* came out in 1893.[35] By the end of the nineteenth century the use of photography in creating a clinical record and for medical education had been thoroughly established.[36]

Early photographs depicting operating room activities are scarce. Close detail required sharp focus, necessitating smaller diaphragm openings on the lens and therefore longer exposures. Longer exposures blurred the image when the doctor probed or the patient drew breath. Early artificial lights were unsuited to the operating room because the carbon-arc lamp burned with an open flame and could not be used in the presence of anesthetic gases. Flash powders were off-limits because of the gases they scattered after ignition. When used to light photographs, mercury vapor lamps did not show bloody details with sufficient clarity. Successful photography of operations in progress was not accomplished until the development of the first practical incandescent lighting systems. (Incandescent bulbs were invented in the 1870s. Systems for generating and providing electrical power for lighting started in the 1880s.) Surgical photography advanced rapidly after the introduction of sensitive panchromatic films in 1904 and photoflash bulbs in 1931.[37] Photographic technology continued to improve (through development, for example, of powerful flashbulbs, more sensitive films, and faster lenses) as the demand for and volume of clinical photography increased.

The silver halide emulsion used on photographic plates in the 1890s was also sensitive to the "Roentgen ray" discovered by Wilhelm Roentgen in 1895, which afforded seemingly miraculous x-ray images of the body's interior. When x-rays became a diagnostic tool after 1895, no one knew whether or not they needed to be retained. The necessary information could often be ascertained from live x-ray images of a patient's insides without creating and preserving a document. (Some very early x-rays were preserved only as a novelty.) As the x-ray became routine for many types of illness, its examination (and re-examination) by more

[34] *Massachusetts General Hospital News*, May 1959, 1–2.

[35] A. R. Williams, "Victorian Clinical Photography," *Journal of Audiovisual Media in Medicine* (1982, no. 5): 100.

[36] Stanley B. Burns, "Early Medical Photography in America (1839–1883)," *New York State Journal of Medicine* (April 1979): 795.

[37] Leonard A. Julin, "A History of Still Photography in the Operating Room," *Journal of the Biological Photographic Association* 39, no. 3 (July 1971): 131–33.

than one person also increased and its preservation as part of the permanent record became standard practice.[38] A study of hospital records in Ontario showed a dramatic increase in the size of case records as well as the variety of types of documents included in patient files starting in the late nineteenth century. These included x-ray positives, x-ray analyses, photographs, and a plethora of other new documents.[39]

The rise of health care technology may have had the unfortunate side effect of distancing patients from their doctors. Patients have reported feeling that their own accounts of how they feel, where it hurts, and so on, have been "devalued" because of the "privileged position" assigned to the "objective" machine. "An overuse of machinery may have made physicians better scientists but poorer healers."[40] Increased numbers of photographs depicting technical equipment in the early twentieth century show how such devices were used and how important they were thought to be by the people who purchased them. By the late twentieth century, most patients and doctors had come to rely on machine-based knowledge and to believe that the best medical care derived from scientific measurements of the body, transcending other techniques.[41]

Ways of Depicting Patients

The three principal components of medical diagnosis are palpation (touching), auscultation (listening), and inspection (seeing with the eyes). As an aid to inspection, photographs have helped doctors describe and convey what they see in invaluable ways.[42] Images of patients have been made (and selected) as tools for diagnosis or teaching, or as devices for otherwise identifying and describing illness.

[38] McCall and Mix, *Designing Archival Programs*, 47–48.

[39] Barbara L. Craig, "Hospital Records and Record-Keeping, c.1850–c.1950, Part I: The Development of Records in Hospitals," *Archivaria* 29 (Winter 1989–90): 64.

[40] Joel D. Howell, *Technology in the Hospital: Transforming Patient Care in the Early Twentieth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 6. Of special interest in this regard is Paul Starr's controversial analysis of the trajectory of American medicine, including the relationship between an increase in technical expertise and the concurrent distancing of patient from practitioner. Paul Starr, *The Social Transformation of American Medicine* (New York: Basic Books, 1982).

[41] Howell, *Technology in the Hospital*, 10. See also Charles Rosenberg, "Technology and Modern Medicine," *Newsletter: American Association for the History of Medicine* 42 (1993): 1–3; and Charles Rosenberg, *The Care of Strangers: The Rise of America's Hospital System* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995). Barbara Maria Stafford has described how "subjective visual judgment is called into question by supposedly objective machinery. . .[A]ttention is transferred from the recognition of visible surface qualities—now deemed deluding—to penetrating devices assumed to be free of illusion." B. M. Stafford, *Good Looking: Essays on the Virtue of Images* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), 143.

[42] See John D. Stoeckle and Guillermo C. Sanchez, "On Seeing Medicine's Science and Art: Cure and Care, Body and Patient," in *The Invention of Photography and Its Impact on Learning*, ed. Louise Ambler and Melissa Banta (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Library, 1989), 73, 77.

Early in his career, Dr. Henry Jacob Bigelow, a mid-nineteenth-century Boston surgeon, employed artists to create a visual record of the conditions he treated and wanted to preserve for further study. By the 1850s, he was also taking some of his patients to the daguerreian studio of John Adams Whipple to have clinical conditions recorded photographically.[43] Because no guidelines existed at the time for clinical photography, and because the aesthetic perceptions of first-rate daguerreotypists were derived from conventions of classical art, the resulting photographs of medical conditions often seem oddly artistic.[44]

The *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* for 10 December 1857 commended John B. Brown, an orthopedic surgeon, for his foresight in documenting the progress of patients photographically, stating that "the daguerreotype apparatus may fairly be considered one of the articles of the surgeon's armamentarium." The same issue suggested that hospitals assign "photographists" to their staffs in the same way and for the same reasons that "microscopists, pathological anatomists, and chemists" had established their roles. In 1858, Bigelow deposited daguerreotypes (as well as medical drawings) of his patients in the Warren Anatomical Museum at Harvard Medical School, where they were carefully cataloged and described as diagnostic and teaching aids for other physicians. The Warren Museum's collections included lithographs, bones, soft tissue preserved in fluid, and other objects in addition to photographs. Pathological images often complemented specimens.[45]

Nineteenth-century doctors permitted their patients' symptoms to develop much further than doctors would today, and extreme conditions were among the favorite subjects for medical photography. One of the practical values of old medical photographs is that the information contained in them can educate today's practitioners about what happens when a disease is allowed to run its full course. Such images are jarring to the nonmedical viewer, and few readers of *American Archivist* would want to be confronted by photographs of 250-pound tumors growing from bedridden patients, or children with their lips, noses, and eyes destroyed by the effects of inherited syphilis, or examples of skeletal malformations, conjoined births, smallpox, severe burns, and other misfortunes.

[43] It is interesting to note that the fledgling Massachusetts Institute of Technology was sufficiently impressed by the scientific applications of photography in 1869 to invite Whipple to teach photographic technique to its undergraduate students "without pecuniary consideration." (To his credit, he accepted this less-than-gracious offer.) MIT Archives and Special Collections, AC 272, Executive Committee, MIT Corporation, box 1, vol. 1, p. 61.

[44] Melissa Banta, *A Curious and Ingenious Art: Reflections on Daguerreotypes at Harvard* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2000), 63.

[45] The following catalog entries are typical: "Morbid Anatomy, 2985. A large, fibro-cellular outgrowth of the skin from over the left buttock. From a woman, twenty-five years of age. The disease was of about six years' duration. . . [etc.] 1857. Dr. H. J. Bigelow. Morbid Anatomy 2986–7. Daguerreotypes of the above case, which was published by Dr. B. in the Med. Jour. (Vol. LXX. P. 174), with a woodcut. 1857. Dr. H .J. Bigelow." J. B. S. Jackson, MD, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Warren Anatomical Museum* (Boston: A. Williams and Company, 1870), 647.

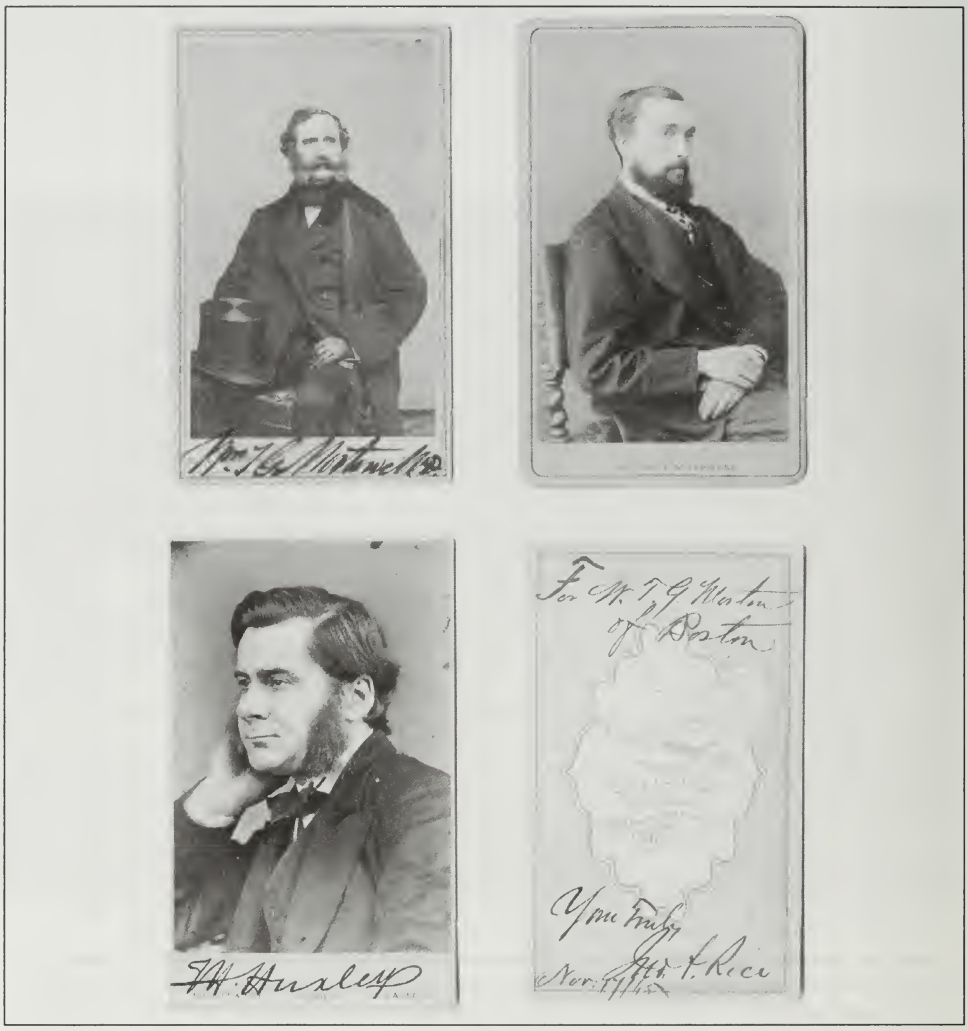
Gallery of Images

1. Dr. John Collins Warren gave his final lecture about surgery in the Operating Room at the Massachusetts General Hospital in the spring of 1847. Warren (touching the etherized patient) arranged for William Morton's "trial" of ether in 1846, the first public demonstration of surgical anesthesia. This image has been used in many contexts (books and exhibits on the history of medicine, postcards, art textbooks, fine arts classes, scholastic aptitude tests, and interior decoration of medical offices) and has served as a reference for historical paintings and the restoration of a national historic landmark. It details the contents and configuration of an American surgical amphitheater in the years after anesthesia but before asepsis and antisepsis. Ether has just been given by means of a conical sponge, and the surgeons are poised (and dressed with suitable dignity) for the operation. The information inherent in the image is intertwined with and supplementary to such additional historical traces as extant ether sponges, Warren's journals, portrait busts, scalpels, and other surgical apparatus.

Josiah Johnson Hawes (commissioned by MGH), daguerreotype. Harvard University, Fogg Art Museum (on long-term loan from the Massachusetts General Hospital Archives and Special Collections).

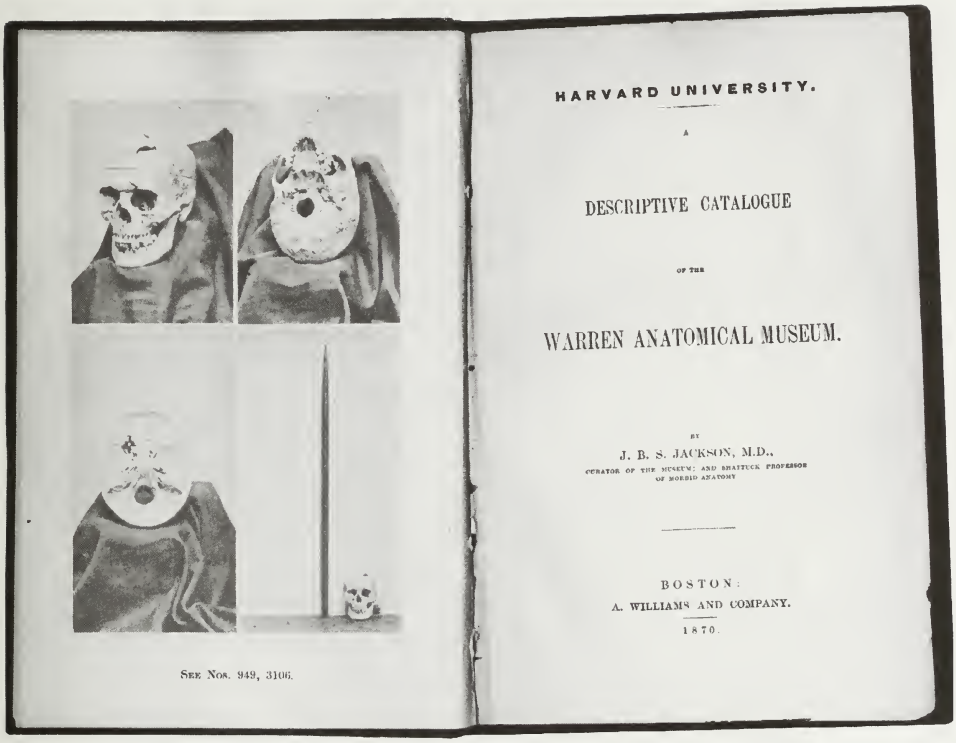
2. Between 1847 and 1884, Harvard Medical School (on right) was adjacent to the Massachusetts General Hospital near the tidal flats of the Charles River, affording medical students easy access to clinical experiences. The hospital received patients and supplies at the wharf during high tide before landfill in the 1860s pushed the tidal basin a thousand feet further west. This image from about 1851 highlights progress, such as new construction, and the mutual benefits of hospital-medical school collaboration. But the photographer has selectively omitted the surrounding community of Irish immigrants packed in crowded tenements, many of which were owned by the MGH's Dr. George Parkman. A well-founded belief in the community that grave robbing was the main source of cadavers used in anatomy labs fueled fears and suspicion. When Parkman was murdered and dismembered by Dr. John Webster in the school's chemistry lab in 1849, an angry mob surrounded the school and threatened to destroy it. Historical maps, city directories, diaries, and newspapers bring out information latent in the image.

Photographer unknown (commissioned by MGH), albumen print from wet plate negative (wet collodion process). Massachusetts General Hospital Archives and Special Collections, Photographic Collections, Buildings Files, Box 2, Folder: Bulfinch Building, exterior views.



3. William T. G. Morton was a Boston dentist who briefly attended classes at Harvard Medical School and exploited his connections with the influential doctors and scientists who helped him develop a sufficiently potent, safe method of anesthesia for surgery. He attempted to conceal the identity of the anesthetic chemical agent (sulphuric ether) and tried to patent the process, resulting in a lawsuit that provoked the scorn of many in the medical profession. His efforts to ingratiate himself into the circles of the medical establishment were unceasing. He may have requested, collected, and shown off *cartes de visite* of influential physicians as an attempt to become associated with men of unassailable reputation. Morton's collection was originally contained in an album (no longer extant), which would have been displayed for guests on a table in the family parlor. The photographs collected by Morton should be viewed in the context of other historical traces, such as the giant gold collar he bought to aggrandize a small French medal he received and the self-serving biography he commissioned, entitled *Trials of a Public Benefactor.*

Studios (clockwise from upper right) of Barraud & Jerrard (London), S. M. Fassett (Chicago), Elliott and Fry (London), and Case and Gretchell (Boston), cartes de visite (card-mounted albumen prints from wet plate negatives (wet collodion process). Massachusetts General Hospital Archives and Special Collections, William T. G. Morton Photograph Collection, Box 1.



See Nos. 949, 3106.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

A

DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE

OF THE

WARREN ANATOMICAL MUSEUM.

BY

J. B. S. JACKSON, M.D.,

CURATOR OF THE MUSEUM; AND SHATTUCK PROFESSOR OF MORBID ANATOMY

BOSTON:

A. WILLIAMS AND COMPANY.

1870.

4. Since 1866, the principal attraction of the Warren Anatomical Collection has been its artifacts relating to the 1848 Phineas Gage incident. Gage lived for twelve-and-one-half years after a railway construction accident in which a huge tamping iron shot through his skull when the rock-blasting charge he was preparing exploded unexpectedly. To the astonishment of the medical community, he survived the blast and quickly recovered normal levels of functioning (although observers noticed puzzling changes in personality). Gage's physician, John M. Harlow, commissioned postmortem photographs of the skull in preparation for a conference presentation. Photographs of the cranium, taken in 1868 from different angles, seem determined to address lingering doubts that the bizarre case might be a hoax. Such documentary images were pasted to the frontispiece of the museum's catalog in 1870. Photographs like this are an invitation to inspect the actual artifacts, best understood when looked at in conjunction with cataloging records, medical reports, newspaper clippings, and journal articles, such as the famous case history published in volume 39 of the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.*

S. Webster Wyman (commissioned by Dr. John M. Harlow), albumen print from wet plate negatives (wet collodion process), pasted in published book. Warren Anatomical Museum, Harvard Medical School.

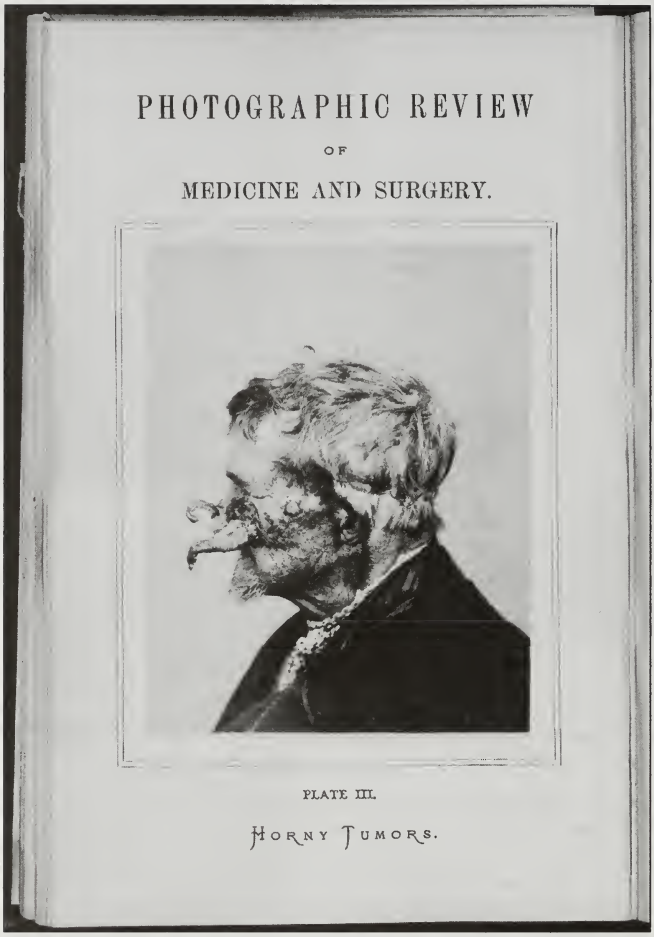
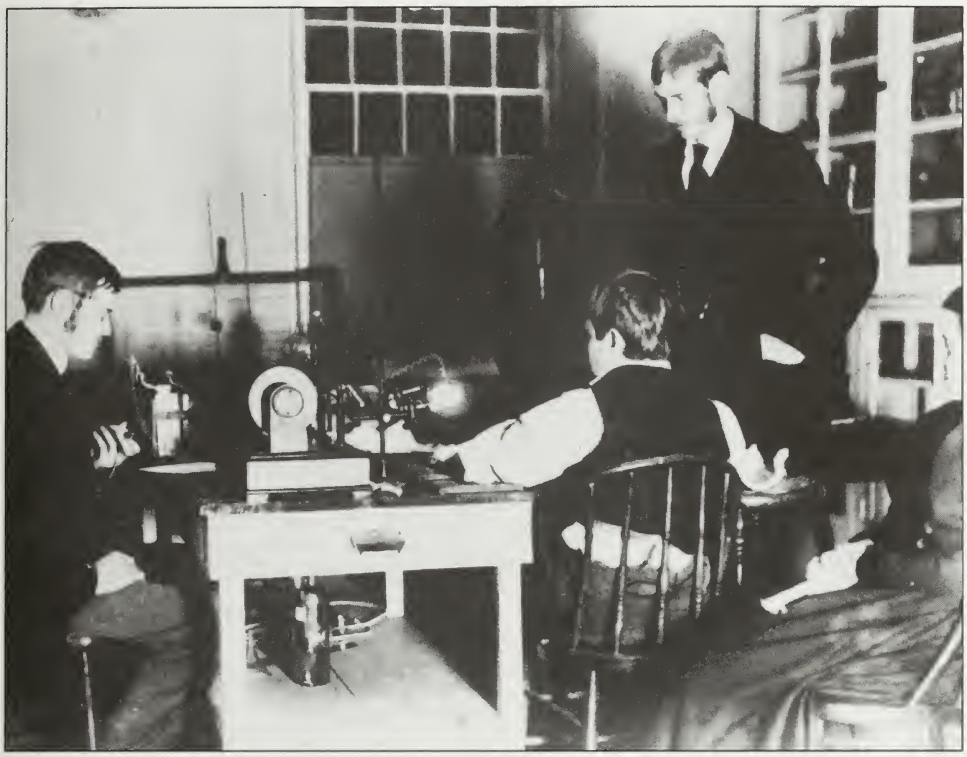

PHOTOGRAPHIC REVIEW
OF
MEDICINE AND SURGERY.

PLATE III.

HORNY TUMORS.

5. *The Photographic Review of Medicine and Surgery* was a short-lived but significant periodical published in Philadelphia (1871–1872), which combined striking images of patients with descriptive texts by attending physicians. The issue seen here features a seventy-eight-year-old sea captain who had spent much of his life exposed to the wind and sun and suffered several attacks of erysipelas, the last of which caused horny excrescences on his cheeks and nose. The "horns" had actually broken off before the patient sought medical help from Dr. William Pancoast, who reattached them with string for the photographer's benefit. Subscribers (a largely medical readership) received original albumen prints pasted onto card stock in each issue. Nineteenth-century patient photographs have a special role in the history of medical photography because they provide graphic evidence of what happened to symptoms when they were allowed to progress to extremes. The two-year run of the *Review* seems in part to be a sincere attempt by American physicians to disseminate usable information among colleagues. In part, though, because of the recurring focus on extreme conditions, it seems like a periodical museum of teratology.

Photographer unknown (commissioned by Dr. William Pancoast), albumen print from gelatin dry plate negative, pasted in published journal. Boston Medical Library in the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, Harvard Medical School.



6. Eddie McCarthy, who fractured his wrist while skating on the Connecticut River near Dartmouth College in 1896, was the subject of the first medical x-ray taken in the United States, an event recorded by the photographic firm of H. H. H. Langhill. Edwin Frost, professor of physics at Dartmouth (brother of the boy's doctor, Gilman Frost) exposed the x-ray, using a gelatin dry plate, Crookes tube, and electrical apparatus from the college physics lab. The exposure took twenty minutes. The brothers had read accounts in New York newspapers regarding the discoveries of Wilhelm Roentgen and were excited by the opportunity to try the technique on a patient. Evidently, having called in a photographer, they knew that the occasion was momentous. Within a few weeks a number of other U.S. enthusiasts were experimenting (somewhat fumblingly) with homemade x-ray apparatus. The Dartmouth image is best understood when viewed in conjunction with the shaky but readable x-ray produced and in comparison with photographs of other primitive x-ray set-ups. The original apparatus survives at Dartmouth's Fairchild Science Center. Contemporary newspaper accounts and journal articles, such as the write-up by Frost for *Science* (14 February 1896), are invaluable.

Studio of H. H. H. Langhill, copy photograph from a vintage print made from a gelatin dry plate negative. Dartmouth College Library.

7. Croquet was one of many organized activities supposed to benefit patients at McLean Asylum in the late nineteenth century. Such games, along with assorted crafts, carriage rides, and other diversions, had earlier in the century been considered essential components of "moral treatment," a therapy designed to create conditions for the mentally ill that would help nature accomplish its own cure. By the time of the 1893 Chicago world's fair, McLean superintendent Dr. Edward Cowles had embarked on a search for the biochemical underpinnings of insanity. McLean's exhibit at the fair won an award for "Forms, Charts, and Photographs." This depiction of moral therapy (from an exhibited photo album full of similar scenes) must be considered in context with the modern hospital forms and charts that pointed toward new directions in mental health care. Cowles had, by 1893, come to see croquet and related pastimes as recreation, not therapy. The meanings of the awards, hospital forms, and photograph album exhibited at the fair become clear when the artifacts are studied in conjunction with the hospital's annual reports and writings by the hospital's superintendent.

Photographer unknown (commissioned by Superintendent Dr. Edward Cowles), albumen print from gelatin dry plate negative, pasted into photograph albums (multiple copies for distribution). Photographic Collections, McLean Hospital Archives.

8. McLean Hospital's Experimental Psychology Laboratory, established by physiologist Shepherd I. Franz in 1904, illustrates the movement toward scientific study of mental illness in which hospital-based researchers attempted to understand correlations between physical and mental conditions. The renaming of McLean (from "asylum" to "hospital") in 1895 reflected such new directions. Understanding mental disease, wrote Superintendent Dr. Edward Cowles, "requires expert ability in experimental physiology and its special department of psychology." Lab equipment seen here includes a Hipp chronoscope, metronome, Kymograph, Rheostat, and perimeter. Clark University psychologist G. Stanley Hall, who advised on the lab, wrote a detailed description of it for the *American Journal of Insanity*. Letterpress halftone images of the hospital's Chemistry Laboratory and Psychology Laboratory appeared in McLean's public relations and fund-raising booklet in 1915. Such images are best studied in conjunction with extant psychology lab equipment at Harvard's Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments, instrument makers' catalogs, purchasing lists at the Harvard Archives, hospital annual reports, published articles, and other documents. The overall context is the emergence of psychology as an academic discipline and the application of laboratory research to the needs of hospital patients in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Photographer unknown (commissioned by Superintendent Dr. George T. Tuttle), albumen print from gelatin dry plate negative. Photographic Collections, McLean Hospital Archives.

9. Superimposing the individual portraits of twelve Boston-area physicians (members of the Kappa Pi Eta Dinner Club, a.k.a. the Grub Club, circa 1910) created the composite image in the center. Darkroom technicians exposed each negative for one-twelfth the normal time to blend the physiognomies into one face. Composite images were often made of groups in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including college graduation classes, nurses, and various occupational groups, such as streetcar conductors. The concept derives from pseudoscientific studies by Francis Galton, who invented the process to identify "typical traits" by disguising anomalies. He believed that facial characteristics revealed mental traits. This photograph was probably intended as a novelty for the personal enjoyment of club members, but most viewers today see the composite image as an illustration of the exclusionary "face of medicine" in Boston in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Membership in the club changed over the years, but the composite faces remain basically the same from one generation of the image to the next. It is useful to compare this photograph with similar composites at Harvard Medical School and to consider them in the light of Galton's preposterous publications.

Marshall Studio (Boston), composite print on matte collodion printing-out paper. Massachusetts General Hospital Archives and Special Collections, Group Portraits Collection, Box 1.

Souvenir Card of the Cabaret and Pop Concert given for the benefit of the
BOSTON FLOATING HOSPITAL
Saturday Evening, August 16, 1913. Beacon Road, Allerton Hull

THE BOSTON FLOATING HOSPITAL (Incorporated)
Office, 54 Devonshire Street. Telephone, Main 3359.
Is a charity supported entirely by the generosity of the public.

It provides, night and day, free treatment, with the benefit of sea air for hundreds of sick babies and little children during the heat of summer.

It is a modern and well-equipped hospital, with seven wards for permanent patients and a spacious open-air deck for day patients and mothers.

The Hospital does not authorize any one to collect funds.

Contributions, however, small, will be gratefully received by George C. Lee, Jr., Treas., 44 State St., Boston.

Post Card

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

THIS SPACE IS FOR THE ADDRESS ONLY

10. The earliest known example of this image of Boston's Floating Hospital is an eight-by-ten-inch print mounted on card stock and dated 1912. The photograph (by Isabel Treganza, a nursing student who had received her training on the boat) was cropped, photomechanically reproduced as a picture postcard, and distributed, probably by the hospital's public relations staff or fund-raising officials. The Floating Hospital offered fresh air, therapy, medical care, and health education for mothers and children from 1894 to 1927, when the boat was destroyed by fire. (Its basic mission continued afterward in land-based facilities.) The early twentieth century was the "Golden Age" of picture postcards, which were mailed and preserved as mementoes of travel or special events and could also serve as a cheap medium for advertising. The date of the event printed on the card should not, of course, be confused with the date on which the photograph was taken.

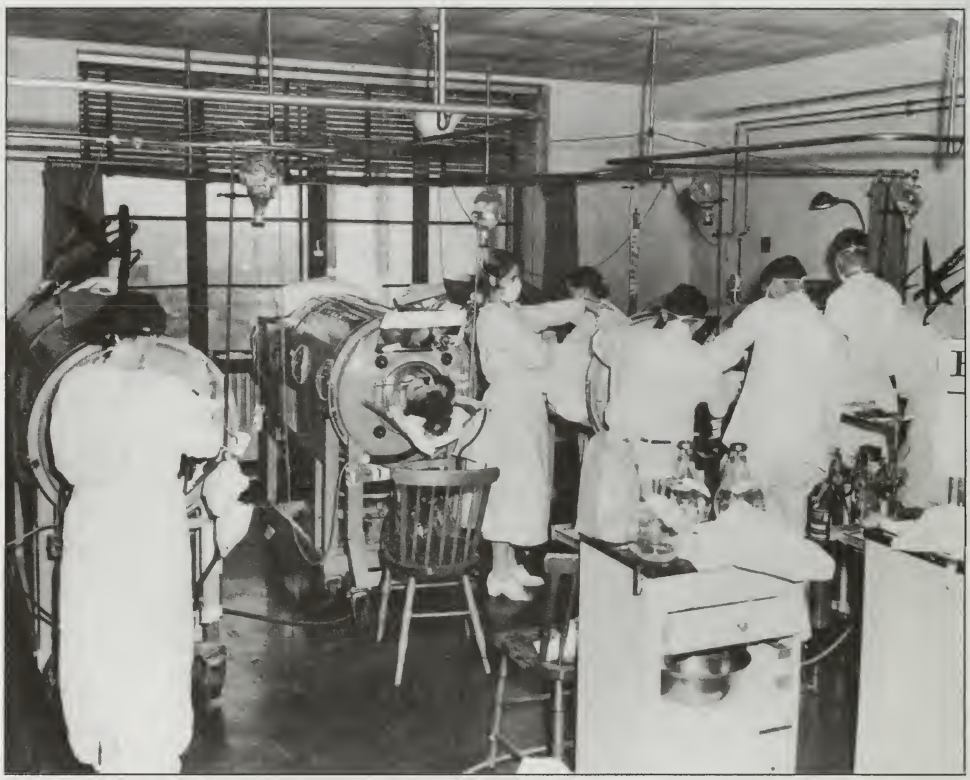
Isabel Treganza, letterpress halftone postcard. Photographic Collections, Massachusetts Historical Society.

11. The North End Diet Kitchen started in 1875 in Boston as a venue for dispensing nutrition as "temporary aid for the sick poor." Doctors attending the indigent sick could distribute tickets for meals cooked by a woman at the kitchen, who apparently also filled jugs, bottles, and pitchers with milk and sent children home with eggs. The date on the wall calendar in this photograph, when magnified, reads "1914." The Diet Kitchen reproduced images such as this on posters used for fund-raising campaigns. In 1923, the board of directors of the North End Diet Kitchen Fund entered into an agreement with the Massachusetts General Hospital, whereby a diet clinic would be established in the hospital's Outpatient Department so that meals as well as education about health care and disease for each patient could be coordinated with the medical, nursing, and social services staff. The MGH also established, in 1905, the first hospital-based department of social services. Photographs depicting hospital outreach to predominantly immigrant populations in the city are best understood in conjunction with census records, city directories, hospital-based social services records, photos of slum conditions, and the writings of influential reformers such as Jane Addams and Ida Cannon.

George Brayton (Boston), commissioned by MGH, albumen print. Massachusetts General Hospital Archives and Special Collections, Subjects Files, Box 8, Folder: North End Diet Kitchen.

12. In 1914, Dr. Paul Dudley White established the Massachusetts General Hospital's first cardiac unit when he returned to Boston after several years of advanced studies in Europe, bringing with him one of the first electrocardiographs in the United States. The MGH administration authorized him to install the equipment in the basement room seen here. The electrocardiograph operated on the principle that magnets and conductors of electric current interact. A conducting string placed between the two poles of a magnet moves in relation to changes in the electrical field on the surface of the patient's body. Changes resulting from the beating of the heart are recorded on an electrocardiogram. Note that the subject's hands (and one foot) are immersed in buckets of ice water so that the apparatus can measure his heart's response to stress. The original apparatus has not survived, but photographs such as this record the layout of equipment and allow us to visualize the procedures, which are better understood after perusal of technicians' guides for electrocardiograph operation and additional paper-based materials (such as White's autobiography and personal papers).

Photographer unknown (commissioned by MGH), gelatin silver print. Massachusetts General Hospital Archives and Special Collections, Biographical Files, Box 11, Folder: Paul Dudley White.



13. The Drinker Respirator (a.k.a. the "iron lung") saved its first life in 1929 at Boston's Peter Bent Brigham Hospital. This photograph shows a flurry of activity at an iron lung ward at the Massachusetts General Hospital during the peak of the polio epidemic in 1955 (81 of the 428 patients admitted required respirators). Whole floors of the hospital were cleared and equipped with special electrical wiring to accommodate the unexpected influx of emergency cases. Iron lungs enveloped all but the patient's head, while angled mirrors afforded patients a less disorienting view of their surroundings. Poliomyelitis is an infectious disease caused by viral inflammation of the spinal cord, often accompanied by paralysis of various muscle groups. The epidemic engendered widespread fears and led to a national program of inoculations using Jonas Salk's recently developed vaccine. A functioning iron lung in the MGH Archives and Special Collections complements such images as an aid to understanding, as do memoirs by survivors and contemporary journal articles, newsreels, and newspaper accounts.

MGH News Office, gelatin silver print from roll film negative. Massachusetts General Hospital Archives and Special Collections, Subjects Files, Box 9, Folder: Poliomyelitis.

Medical photographs of powerless patients reinforce points stressed by Michel Foucault and elaborated upon by John Tagg about power relations. Tagg showed that the controlling characteristics of photography by the mid-nineteenth century extended beyond police files, prisons, and criminology to schools, factories, hospitals, asylums, and other institutions. Psychiatric portraits, for example, furnished a "permanent record for medical guidance and physiognomic analysis."[46] Francis Galton collected quantities of visual records of faces in support of his theories of eugenics.[47] The "knowledge and truth of which photography became the guardian were inseparable from the power and control which they engendered."[48]

A specialized, small-circulation French magazine, *La revue photographique des hopitaux de Paris*, included a hand-colored photograph of a patient, illustrating his or her condition, each month between 1869 and 1876. In such early patient photographs one often senses that the physician used his influence (based on education, social status, economic power, and sometimes military rank) to take advantage of patients. Modern viewers cringe at such invasions of privacy, which sometimes expose genitalia as well as gashes, deformities, and stumps. The subjects are often wounded, twisted, or naked, and objectified in much the same way that antebellum slaves were objectified in photographs commissioned by Harvard scientist Louis Agassiz in 1850 (now at Harvard's Peabody Museum) or Civil War casualties[49] were when posing for military physicians. Those who do research in Civil War medical photographs know that wounded officers are shown more modestly covered than wounded enlisted men. "We know how to view conventional portraits," explained Alan Trachtenberg, "but to gaze upon naked bodies, male and female, of persons dispossessed of themselves, is another matter."[50]

[46] See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979) and John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographs and Histories* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 77–78.

[47] See Martin Kemp and Marina Wallace, *Spectacular Bodies: The Art and Science of the Human Body from Leonardo to Now* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 134–47. Cesare Lombroso also collected and scrutinized photographs of human faces as part of his campaign to prove that criminal types were atavistic creatures who had retained the traits of primitive people and inferior animals.

[48] Tagg, *The Burden of Representation*, 180.

[49] Walt Whitman's *Specimen Days* and *Leaves of Grass* paint pictures in words of the conditions inside Union hospitals during the Civil War in ways reminiscent of photography. His volunteer work as a nurse put him closely in touch with the wounded, including their physical injuries and psychological trauma. See, for example, "The Wound Dresser" (poem) or "An Army Hospital Ward" (prose) in Walt Whitman, *Complete Poetry and Collected Prose*, ed. Justin Kaplan (New York: Library of America, 1982), 442–45, 718–19. Six volumes of Civil War medical photography were selected and published by the U.S. Surgeon General. *Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion (1861–1865), United States Army* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1870–1888).

[50] Alan Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs: Images as History, Mathew Brady to Walker Evans* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989), 56. See also Wallis, "Black Bodies, White Science." Regarding the photograph and its contributions toward perception of identity, a noted sociologist has characterized the portrait as a "decorative representation of self that serves to present one's social identity." Erving Goffman, "Gender Advertisements," *Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication* 3, no. 2 (Fall 1976): 68. See also Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1959).

By the end of the century, medical journals offered practical advice for doctors who wanted to exploit the potentials of the camera for recording the condition of patients. Bodies were sometimes draped to protect identities. Black bars typically (but not always) masked identity in the resulting image, and opaque triangles ordinarily concealed genitalia.[51] In part, this increase in draping and masking (displaying less of the patient and disguising identity) reflected an increased focus on the isolation of disease that was related to the evolution of medical specialization. As medical knowledge advanced, identification of specific disease entities gradually replaced older diagnoses such as miasmas and fevers. The specific symptoms were photographed in isolation, using various lights and processes to capture details that could be used for diagnosis and education. The resulting increase in patient privacy has been, as some have suggested, offset by the unintentional side effect of reducing the sufferer to his or her "photographed lesion."[52]

Clinical illustration and instruction are the usually cited justifications, in the nineteenth century as well as the present, for medical photography of patients. Physicians shared pictures of goiter, clubfoot, and harelip, as well as images of double-headed births, mental deficiency, amputations, and postmortems, and used them to teach students. Pictures taken before and after surgery were common heuristic devices.[53]

Visual insights into doctor-patient relationships, at least until recently, have been rare because of the canon of confidentiality. Encounters between physicians and patients were generally off-limits to the camera until the late 1930s when photographers for the U.S. Farm Security Administration (FSA) traveled widely, taking pictures in medical offices, migratory labor camps, and even venereal disease clinics to promote federal medical care programs. The trend continued through World War II because of a perceived need to make concerns about health and fitness more visible in furtherance of the war effort.[54] Photographs of the medical conditions of patients now seem freighted with a plethora of associations and potential uses, such as studying the power relations between doctor and patient, or changing attitudes toward race, ethnicity, gender, morals, and social class. Today, patients rarely refuse their consent to having photos taken. "Being looked at by a doctor, camera, or diagnostic

[51] Stoeckle and White, *Plain Pictures of Plain Doctoring*, 112–14.

[52] Burns, "Early Medical Photography" VII, 1261–62. See also Alison Gernsheim, "Medical Photography in the Nineteenth Century," *Medical and Biological Illustration* 11 (1961): 85.

[53] Stoeckle and White, *Plain Pictures of Plain Doctoring*, 112–14. Photographs were not subject to copyright law in the United States until 1884, when the Supreme Court ruled that they could be considered the product of "intellectual invention" and not simply reproductions of nature created by the operator of a machine. *Burrow-Giles Lithographic Company v. Sarony* 11 U.S. 53; 4 S. Ct. 279; 28 L. Ed. 349 (1884).

[54] Stoeckle and White, *Plain Pictures of Plain Doctoring*, 184.

machine is a deeply ingrained visual expectation of the office medical encounter."[55]

Illustrating Publications

In the fledgling years of medical photography, many doctors hoped that one-of-a-kind daguerreotype images could be etched so that the resulting plates could be used for mass reproduction of medical illustrations for publication in books and journals. Early experiments with this process were less than satisfactory. The book *Cours de Microscopie*, by Donné, for example, was published in 1845 with eighty-six images made by an engraver who copied them from the original daguerreotypes. The author had hoped to print directly from etched daguerreotypes, but the results were too faint to convey an adequate amount of the required information. The publication nevertheless qualifies as the first medical book illustrated by images copied from photographs.[56]

In the 1840s, other attempts were made to include photographic medical images in publications by inserting woodcuts or engravings derived from them, or by experimental mechanical methods, such as the photolithographic process of Bradford and Cutting, which proved less than adequate.[57] Woodcuts made from medical daguerreotypes started appearing in medical journals in 1849, and by the mid-1850s, journal illustrations based on photographs were relatively common.[58] Some early medical books with images derived from photographs contain captions with double attributions, indicating who made the daguerreotype and who made the woodcut or engraving that reproduced (and to some degree interpreted) information based on it. Multiple processes of illustration were sometimes employed in the same medical book. The elephantine *Medical and Surgical*

[55] Stoeckle and Sanchez, "On Seeing Medicine's Science and Art," 81. Since the implementation of the 1996 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) in 2003, obtaining written consent (or finding such written consent in the files) is a *sine qua non* for any archivist in the U.S. considering the dissemination of photographs containing Protected Health Information (PHI). But the act provides inadequate guidance for archivists who must administer historical collections containing patient information, as outlined in a letter from Tim Erickson and Jodi Koste to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson, 22 October 2003. The letter is printed in *Watermark: Newsletter of the Archivists and Librarians in the History of the Health Sciences* 27, no. 1 (Winter 2003–2004): 4–6. See also Julie Bell, "Privacy of Dead Perplexes Living," *Baltimore Sun*, 13 November 2003. For more information about this cumbersome act, see http://www.cms.hhs.gov/HIPAAGenInfo, accessed 11 May 2006, and http://privacyruleandresearch.nih.gov/, accessed May 11, 2006.

[56] Burns, "Early Medical Photography" II, 947. See also R. H. Krauss, "Photographs as Early Scientific Book Illustrations," *History of Photography* 2, no. 4 (October 1978): 291.

[57] John Dean, *Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge, no. 173, Photographs: The Grey Substance of the Medulla Oblongota and Trapesium* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1864) was issued as nine cards containing thirty-six photolithographs. A bound and expanded version of the work came out in 1865 with sixteen plates containing sixty-five images. The author also distributed sets of the photographs privately. Burns, "Early Medical Photography" VII, 1229–30, 1248.

[58] Burns, "Early Medical Photography" III, 1258.

History of the War of the Rebellion, for example, includes photographic prints (woodburytypes and heliotypes) as well as varieties of mechanical photoduplication.

A number of medical publications from the second half of the nineteenth century contained albumen prints pasted in by hand. A short-lived but noteworthy bimonthly periodical in the United States published annotated photographs of "interesting cases" for limited distribution to a professional readership. The cases seem to have been selected primarily to show extreme examples of conditions, a sort of periodical museum of teratology.[59] Photographic images appeared regularly in medical textbooks by the 1890s. Dr. Richard Cabot's classic early-twentieth-century textbook, *Physical Diagnosis*, is notable for its extensive use of photomechanically reproduced, often carefully cropped, photographs depicting not only symptoms of various diseases, but also step-by-step techniques for examination.[60]

The Professional Image

In the late nineteenth century, photographs greatly influenced public opinion about doctors and medicine, resulting in widespread enthusiasm for medical breakthroughs and public support for laboratory research, vivisection, and other practices and expenditures perceived to be directed toward medical progress.[61] Training by apprenticeship (without benefit of any formal medical education) had been the principal avenue whereby a man became a doctor in the early years of American medical history.[62] Medical schools in the United States (four in 1800, seventeen by the 1820s, thirty in 1839) were meant to supplement apprenticeship, which remained the most important basis of training. Efforts to raise the standards of the American medical profession, to "professionalize" it, met with difficulty, and many quacks, sectarians, and incompetents

[59] F. F. Maury and L. A. Duhring, eds., *Photographic Review of Medicine and Surgery: A Bi-monthly Illustration of Interesting Cases, Accompanied by Notes* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Co., 1871–1872). On the mechanics of publishing books illustrated with original photographs (and the difficulties endured by bibliographers attempting to describe such works), see Helmut Gernsheim, *Incunabula of British Photographic Literature* (London: Scolar Press, 1984), 7–10. See also Lucien Goldschmidt and Weston Naef, *The Truthful Lens: A Survey of the Photographically Illustrated Book, 1844–1914* (New York: The Grolier Club, 1980), 5.

[60] See, for example, the "how-to" photos in the third edition, which incorporates five plates and 240 figures, many of which are photomechanical reproductions that have been embedded into wraparound text. Richard Cabot, *Physical Diagnosis*, 3rd ed. (New York: William Wood and Co., 1905). Cabot's textbook went through many editions.

[61] Bert Hanson, "New Images of a New Medicine: Visual Evidence for Widespread Popularity of Therapeutic Discoveries in America after 1885," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 73 (1999): 629–78.

[62] The first woman to attend medical school was Elizabeth Blackwell, who was admitted to medical studies in 1847 in the United States, but finished requirements for her degree in France. U.S. hospitals refused to hire her after her return to America, and she opened her own clinic in New York City in the 1850s. Julia Boyd, *The Excellent Doctor Blackwell: The Life of the First Female Physician* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, U.K.: Sutton, 2005).

continued to practice. Legislation in some states stipulated that medical practitioners have an MD, a movement that resulted less in the raising of standards than in the proliferation of easy medical schools.[63] A mid-nineteenth-century joke held that "MD" stood for "Maker of Dead Men."[64] A cartoon from the same era at the National Library of Medicine in Bethesda, Maryland, shows a bewildered patient being bled by his physician while a nearby butcher slices the throat of a pig. "Doctor," says the butcher, "our cures are similar. Suppose we consult?"[65] Americans had little respect for medicine in the mid-nineteenth century.

François Arago's highly influential endorsement of photography to the French scientific establishment shortly after its invention bolstered its status as a medium for portraiture as well as for scientific work.[66] As the century progressed, photography played a significant role in improving the image of doctors, medical schools, and medical practice in general. By the 1870s and 1880s, physicians were frequently photographed surrounded by the latest technological devices.[67] Sander Gilman discussed how those who constructed the history of medicine used visual representations. Images, especially photographs, framed the history of medicine as a story of progress.[68]

People in power (e.g., doctors, hospital administrators, medical school personnel, or government agencies) usually controlled the production of medical images and arranged for them to be either accepted or discarded.[69] Even when medical images were not accompanied by "overt analysis," they were often still "manipulated" by selection to fit a "Procrustean bed" illustrating the "ever-improving reality of medical care of the patient."[70] Hospitals have usually been circumspect about what photographs they allow to be taken and even more so about which can be published.[71] "The historical challenge is to show how. . .representations were related to changes in medical power. . .to arrive at new understandings of the past. From them we can learn about people's ways of

[63] Richard Harrison Shryock, *Medicine and Society in America: 1660–1860* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977), 137–44.

[64] Michael West, *Transcendental Wordplay* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000), 21.

[65] The cartoon is reproduced in David Armstrong and Elizabeth Armstrong, *The Great American Medicine Show* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1991), 10.

[66] See François Arago, *Rapport sur le daguerréotype* (La Rochelle: Rumeur des âges, 1995). The original report appeared in Paris in 1839.

[67] Burns, "Early Medical Photography" VII, 1259.

[68] Sander Gilman, "History and Images in Medicine," in *History and. . . Histories within the Human Sciences*, ed. Ralph Cohen and Michael Roth (Charlottesville, Va., and London: University Press of Virginia, 1995), 90–112.

[69] Daniel M. Fox and Christopher Lawrence, *Photographing Medicine: Images and Power in Britain and America since 1840* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 5–6.

[70] Gilman, "History and Images in Medicine," in *History and. . .Histories*, 93–94.

[71] Apple, "Picturing the Hospital," *The American General Hospital*, 69.

seeing—how images were created and used, how they carried messages about what to value and how to behave."[72]

Picture Captions and Related Notes

A key responsibility for archivists and historians is to determine which of the "many stories" evoked by photographs are most plausible, ". . .most likely to have been in the minds of the people who took, looked at, and preserved" them.[73] We, as archivists, should bear in mind that captions, or explanatory notes, are often essential to the accurate interpretation of medical photographs and other historical images.[74] Historical photographs not accompanied by words or not found in a readable context are ambiguous. Elizabeth Edwards observed that the meaning of photographs can be "suggested and guided" by accompanying written material that "further enmeshes them in a particular context." Words can be "used to position the photograph and processes of interpretation are controlled through the interaction of image and text."[75] FSA photographers, for example, usually included captions with the images they submitted,[76] but the quality (and usefulness) of these written supplements varied greatly. Dorothea Lange was especially concerned about interviewing her subjects in depth and taking careful notes to develop a multidimensional context for each image.[77] Some of her colleagues were much less conscientious.

Walter Benjamin believed that dislocation of images made captions a necessity, because without them a viewer could not anchor an image in time and space, and the image would lose its validity and authenticity.[78] Daniel Fox and

[72] Fox and Lawrence, *Photographing Medicine*, 6.

[73] Daniel M. Fox, "Physicians at Work: Self- and Public Images, 1890–1930," *Medical Heritage* 2, no. 1 (1986): 20.

[74] On problems of dislocation, lost captions, lost notes, etc., see, for example, Hermine Munz Baumhofer, "Some Reference Problems of Picture Collections," *American Archivist* 13 (April 1950): 121–28; and Joe Thomas, "Photographic Archives," *American Archivist* 21, no. 4 (1958): 423–24.

[75] Edwards, *Anthropology and Photography,* 11. Captions, of course, are also subject to problems of mistake and manipulation, not to mention accidental separation from the image they are meant to describe. Yet, despite their shortcomings, they answer important questions if used with the same caveats one would apply to any other historical trace. Consider the many galloping evocations of Dorothea Lange's 1936 "Migrant Mother" photograph, which are reined in only by an examination of Lange's field notes. See David Finn, *How to Look at Photographs: Reflections on the Art of Seeing* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994), 80–82; Tucker, "The Historian, the Picture, and the Archive," *Isis* 97 (March 2006): 118–19; and Karin Becker Ohrn, *Dorothea Lange and the Documentary Tradition* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 97–98.

[76] Stoeckle and White, *Plain Pictures of Plain Doctoring,* 117.

[77] See Ohrn, *Dorothea Lange,* 96–98. Lange wrote down what she saw and heard as soon as possible in notebooks intended to accompany the images to the photographic repository.

[78] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility, Third Version," in Benjamin, *Selected Writings,* vol. 4, 1938–1940 (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), 258.

James Terry pointed to the elaborate procedures whereby photographs have always been selected and preserved "consciously or unconsciously. . .by some combination of subject, photographer and collector." (To "collector" we might easily add "archivist.") Agreeing with philosopher Roland Barthes, they emphasized the importance of "correlative texts," or written data, without which it is difficult to establish meaning. But many medical images lack a "documented contemporary explanation."[79]

Context and Meaning

Much of the current discourse about historical photographs places special emphasis on the importance of context for sorting out the ambiguities and multiple meanings inherent in images.[80] Jim Burant emphasizes how important it is for archivists to supply researchers with accurate contextual information about images to position them better to make informed interpretations. He regrets that much of this work, even by larger and relatively well-staffed repositories, still remains to be done.[81] Joan Schwartz advises that "archivists must recognize that archival value in photographs resides in the interrelationships between photographs and the creating structures, animating functions, programmes, and information technology that created them." Context "transforms photographic images into photographic documents."[82]

Archivists, including those in the history of the health sciences, are responsible for vast assortments of images, only some of which grew organically. Others come to the archives from a jumble of creators and donors (and are often of unknown origin).[83] In hospitals, the survival of historical medical photographs often depended on the efforts of committed individuals, usually doctors with historical interests, instead of organized institutional commitments. For years the MGH News Office, for example, amassed photographs that were commissioned, donated by retirees, or transferred from the hospital's photo lab. The office director filed these by personal name or subject in folders that included

[79] Daniel M. Fox and James Terry, "Photography and the Self-Image of American Physicians, 1880–1920," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 52 (1978): 453. Some historians have asserted that photographs (as well as other pictorial materials) "can never supply the narrative line that is so central to the historian's task." James W. Davidson and Mark H. Lytle, *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection*, vol. 1 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), 115.

[80] Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, 187.

[81] Burant, "Visual Archives and the Writing of Canadian History," 115–17.

[82] Schwartz, " 'We make our tools and our tools make us,' " 50.

[83] On a related note, Elizabeth Edwards regrets that contexts of photographic images have often been destroyed through the process of archiving. *Raw Histories*, 35.

newspaper clippings, press releases, and correspondence related to that person or subject.[84] Archival outreach to departments and laboratories typically unearths old photographs in neglected storage closets, tucked behind file cabinets, or hanging on walls. The provenance of most of these images cannot be reconstructed with complete confidence, although well-informed judgment based on understanding the hospital's practices has, I believe, often come close.

Meanings associated with more immediate contexts of photographs within the larger context of the archival repository invite further scrutiny.[85] It seems likely that William T. G. Morton's personal collection of *cartes de visite* of prominent physicians[86] testifies to his social climbing and prolonged struggle to bolster his shaky professional status by associating himself with men of unassailable reputation. Morton was the Boston dentist who administered ether during the first public demonstration of surgical anesthesia in 1846. He was doggedly persistent and had an uncanny ability to insinuate himself into the right company at the right time.[87] It seems likely that portable wooden cases of glass slides[88] depicting hospital wards and buildings in the 1890s were used for lantern slide presentations promoting the MGH and demonstrating that money donated to the hospital was money well spent. Early twentieth-century photograph albums stored among nursing and social work files[89] captured and preserved evidence of departmental cohesion, sisterhood, and pride for future generations of nurses and social workers. Close-up 35 mm color slides arranged and labeled in loose-leaf binders by surgeon Ronald Malt[90] in the 1960s recorded his innovative techniques for surgical replantation of severed limbs and were probably intended as a "how-to" reference for junior colleagues.

[84] "Archival potentials change over time; the keys are appropriated by different disciplines, discourses, specialties. For example, the pictures in photo agency files become available to history when they are no longer useful to topical journalism." Allan Sekula, "Reading an Archive: Photography Between Labour and Capital," in *The Photography Reader*, ed. Liz Wells (London: Routledge, 2003), 445. In the parlance of the archives profession, the value of a document can change, for example, from "evidential" to "informational."

[85] As Elizabeth Edwards reminds us, collections donated by individuals to a central archival repository tend to become "absorbed within specific institutional agendas of description, function, and usage." *Raw Histories*, 30.

[86] Massachusetts General Hospital Archives and Special Collections, William T. G. Morton Photograph Collection, Box 1

[87] Richard J. Wolfe, *Tarnished Idol: William Thomas Green Morton and the Introduction of Surgical Anesthesia, a Chronicle of the Ether Controversy* (San Anselmo, Calif.: Norman Publishing, 2001).

[88] Massachusetts General Hospital Archives and Special Collections, Lantern Slide Collection, Boxes 1–4.

[89] Massachusetts General Hospital Archives and Special Collections, AC 2, Records of the MGH Department of Social Services, Boxes 10, 14–15.

[90] Massachusetts General Hospital Archives and Special Collections, AC 25, MGH Department of Surgery (Replantation Operations), Boxes 1–3.

The so-called MGH daguerreotypes[91] merge two original contexts, ether anesthesia images taken by the firm of Southworth and Hawes[92] in the 1840s and patient images taken by John Adams Whipple for Dr. Bigelow, mostly in the 1850s. Their artificial, overarching label, "MGH daguerreotypes," is based primarily on their stature as treasures of the hospital's legacy, on their status as noteworthy examples of early American photography, and on the fact that they have come to be categorized as "art" and are used as such by Harvard University for teaching and exhibits.[93] Bigelow gave most of his patient photographs to Harvard's Warren Anatomical Museum about 150 years ago. The hospital was in the nineteenth century (and still is) a close teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School. Was the MGH component of Bigelow's collection created for some distinct purpose, or did the "MGH daguerreotypes" merely stray from the anatomical museum, mavericks borrowed for a demonstration or diagnosis years ago and never returned? The written documentary record is silent.

Expanding Depth of Field

Hugh Taylor, alluding to the "complexity of archival knowledge," urged archivists to look at "the riches. . .within the cultural and contextual dimension of the record in all its forms," arguing for the cooperation of archivists and historians as "professional allies."[94] David Smith, reminding his colleagues in the archival profession that they are "peculiarly competent to deal with particular historical problems [raised] by the records in their custody," argued that he could not "accept that the archivist should merely function as the custodian and agent of preservation and no more."[95] Archivists can (and should) use their special knowledge of the content and context of collections to offer insights in addition to orienting users to various research opportunities and options.

[91] Cataloged as MGH 1–MGH 25 by Harvard University's Fogg Art Museum, which has them on long-term loan.

[92] These photographs commissioned by the MGH are among the most frequently reproduced medical images in the world. Southworth and Hawes later published a notice in which they boasted that the firm had successfully taken "several pictures of the surgeons of the Massachusetts Hospital with the patient under the influence of ether, all accurate likenesses." *The Massachusetts Register: A State Record of the Year 1852* (Boston: 1852), 328.

[93] Deborah Martin Kao, Curator of Photography, Fogg Art Museum, personal communication, 2004.

[94] Hugh A. Taylor, "The Discipline of History and the Education of the Archivist," in *Imagining Archives: Essays and Reflections by Hugh A. Taylor,* ed. Terry Cook and Gordon Dodds (Lanham, Md., and Oxford: Society of American Archivists and Association of Canadian Archivists in association with Scarecrow Press, 2003), 61–62.

[95] David M. Smith, "The Archivist's Personal Involvement in Historical Research," *Archives* 12, no. 56 (Autumn 1976): 167–68.

Photographs of operating rooms, for example, can be examined in conjunction with surgical records, medical and surgical textbooks, correspondence, and memoirs to illuminate aspects of surgical practice in bygone eras. Extant images often preserve a record of facts so mundane to contemporaries that they go unrecorded in written documentation, for instance, that surgeons operated in dark frock coats in the years before aseptic and antiseptic surgery. (Surgery, we infer, was a correct and dignified occupation, requiring a gentleman's attire. We only know this because of the visual record.) Photographs fix and define the configuration of scalpels, retractors, restraints, bowls, towels, and observers. Photographs of wards can be used in conjunction with blueprints, architects' reports, committee findings, and medical journal articles extolling the virtues of ventilation or spatial isolation of patients and decrying the effects of cross-infection. Extant photographs of defunct wards include interesting architectural details (which would otherwise be lost), such as those revealing that tile patterns on the floors of nineteenth-century wards at New York Hospital dictated the precise placement of beds and that these fixed guidelines were ignored a few decades after construction because of overcrowding.[96]

The history of medicine once focused almost exclusively on landmark events and the prominent people who were instrumental in bringing them about. Medical historians typically had training as either doctors or scientists and based their research on published accounts, such as articles in professional journals, and (occasionally) interviews. They have typically used historical medical photographs only to illustrate works, usually as afterthoughts rather than traces of the readable past ripe for interpretation.[97] A 1980 article in *Archivaria*, calling for broadened views of what medical historical studies should embrace, makes no mention of photographs in an extensive list of materials recommended for historians researching the social history of medicine.[98] Now, as a result of increased interest in social history, and the need for budding historians to find fresh topics for dissertations, materials like patient records are much sought after for historical research. A new generation of historians wants to explore and analyze ways in which social class, race, or gender factor into the

[96] Jeanne Kisacky, "Restructuring Isolation: Hospital Architecture, Medicine, and Disease Prevention," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 79, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 30.

[97] Sander Gilman warned that, "It is. . .imperative to understand the historical context that permitted cultural and social history to use visual images as source materials, while medical history consistently avoided them. The illustrated medical history reflects a set of biases limiting the ability of the historian to use fully the multiple meanings inherent in the visual image. This limitation has its roots in the construction of medical history as a professional discourse in the late nineteenth century." "History and Images in Medicine," in *History and. . .Histories,* 98.

[98] Samuel Shortt, "The New Social History of Medicine: Some Implications for Research," *Archivaria* 10 (Summer 1980): 21.

administration of health care. Nevertheless, historical medical photographs remain underused for systematic study, even by this newer generation of scholars. Lack of time and patience, and a general shortfall of visual literacy, must be counted among the sticking points.

The aim of photographic research should be to challenge existing interpretations and raise new questions, to weave the fabric of history in more elaborate patterns and color it in deeper hues. As archivists, we should think about ways in which visual sources can be integrated with other historical traces to improve the process of interpretation. A checklist or inventory sheet incorporating relevant information can be a useful tool for description as well as for tracking the uses to which an image has been put and anchoring it in original documentary contexts. The MGH Archives and Special Collections inventory form may serve as a model, to be tailored to each repository's individual needs.[99] Such inventory sheets should be updated as additional information or new insights become available.

The historically grounded, contextualized interpretation of historical photographs requires a sophisticated understanding of contexts and consideration of many facets. Who took the picture, and why, and when? Who posed and under what circumstances? What equipment was used and what were its limitations? What was the intended impression and who were the original recipients? What commentary or title accompanies the image, and at what period and for what reason was this associated text produced? How was the image originally used, why and by whom was it preserved, and how has its meaning changed when different viewers at different times have confronted it? How are the pitfalls of interpretation best avoided, for example, the ventriloquism that occurs when a researcher's voice, reflecting his or her contemporary concerns and perceptions, supplants the voice of the document?[100]

Philosopher Paul Ricoeur suggested that "the document sleeping in the archives is not just silent, it is an orphan. The testimonies it contains are detached. . . ." He went on to suggest that archivists should be "competent to question [documents in their care] and hence to defend them," administering them in ways that discourage misinterpretation.[101] Many patrons approach photographs with an "undiscriminating attitude," which archivists should

[99] The MGH Archives and Special Collections inventory form is reproduced in the appendix.

[100] Note, in this regard, that the lure of the past can make its traces and their associations seem more real than the present for some observers. "The richly elaborated past seems more familiar. . .in some respects. . .than our own nearby present; the here and now lacks the felt density and completeness of what time has filtered and ordered." David Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 3.

[101] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 169.

"moderate" by "stripping away the layers of misinformation" and promoting "intelligent use."[102]

This is not to say that we, as archivists, should force our opinions on researchers. It is, rather, to suggest that archivists should strive to acquire enough substantive knowledge of the subjects in their collections to develop competency for questioning historical photographs and other traces of the past. An "interest in history and familiarity with its methodology" are essential to the process of judging the "informational value" of documents "within the larger context of the documentary resources."[103] The skills needed for seeing more accurately than others what resides in a historical photograph "need to be cultivated."[104] The background and context, if known, of historical photographs, texts, artifacts, or sound recordings should always be considered.

Digging, sifting, and comparing (the archaeological trope is deliberate) are perhaps suitable metaphors for the type of effort that may be required. A handbook for students of archaeology correctly states that archaeologists can gain many insights from documentary evidence, but that old documents are not always easy to understand. When consulting historical maps or other old papers the resourceful archaeologist seeks the advice of a historian with expertise appropriate to the subject at hand.[105] Most archivists, armed with a master's degree in history or library science, are not well prepared for understanding the nuances of medical subjects, or other specialties.[106] But an argument can be made that archivists have "failed in a major responsibility" if they don't "broaden [their] competence" to acquire better comprehension of materials in their charge.[107]

[102] Peter Robertson, "More Than Meets the Eye," *Archivaria* 1, no. 2 (1976): 33, 42–43. On the role of archivists in shaping meaning by constructing provenance and contextual background based upon the information available to them, see Tom Nesmith, "Still Fuzzy, But More Accurate: Some Thoughts on the 'Ghosts' of Archival Theory," *Archivaria* 47 (Spring 1999): 136–50.

[103] Normand Charbonneau, "The Selection of Photographs," *Archivaria* 59 (Spring 2005): 121.

[104] James A. Terry, Antol Herskovitz, and Daniel M. Fox, "Photographs Tell More than Meets the Eye," *Journal of Biological Photography* 48, no. 3 (July 1980): 111.

[105] Jane McIntosh, *The Practical Archaeologist: How We Know What We Know About the Past* (New York: Facts on File Publications, 1986), 44–45. See also Anders Andren, *Between Artifacts and Texts* (New York: Plenum, 1998).

[106] "In his defense the archivist may argue that his training did not prepare him to handle the manuscripts and archives produced by the sciences. . .[But] one of the most important functions the archivist will have in the future will be to serve as a bridge between the scientist and the historian." J. Frank Cook, "The Archivist: Link Between Scientist and Historian," *American Archivist* 34 (October 1971): 377. (For *scientist* we may well substitute *doctor* or *medical professional.*)

[107] Cook, "The Archivist: Link Between Scientist and Historian," 378. Likewise, Lester Cappon stressed that the "substance of archives" is the "real basis for the archival profession, the *raison d'être* for being an archivist," and he urged increased comprehension of contents. Lester J. Cappon, "Tardy Scholars Among the Archivists," in Richard Cox, ed., *Lester J. Cappon and the Relationship of History, Archives, and Scholarship in the Golden Age of Archival Theory* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2004), 52–53.

The need will arise, for example, for archivists in the history of health care to study books, articles, or Web sites explaining historical medical and surgical instruments, consult nineteenth-century medical dictionaries, and inspect objects with a view to understanding what they were used for and how they worked. Archivists can often acquire deeper understanding through interactions with well-informed researchers. At other times, the flow must be from archivist to client. It is advantageous, at least at first, to cultivate a network of medically trained advisors, perhaps semiretired physicians with historical interests, who can help with identification of instruments or procedures depicted in old photographs, reminisce about bygone people and buildings, and decipher the arcane shorthand of historical medical records.[108] It then becomes the archivist's additional responsibility to evaluate the accuracy of the information provided. Ask such questions as "Does the informant's memory seem acute? Is his or her area of expertise relevant? What is my overall impression of the reliability of this informant?"

Neither archivists nor historians will ever grasp the universe of knowledge, or find, as did the narrator of a "fiction" by Jorge Luis Borges, a point of space in a dark cellar that contains all other spaces and empowers the vision of all things past and present.[109] We may never attain the confidence exhibited by Holgrave, Nathaniel Hawthorne's fictional daguerreotypist in *The House of the Seven Gables*, who believed that the sun's action on his prepared plates afforded him "wonderful insight" that went beneath the "merest surface" to discern "secret character."[110] Many questions are open to interpretation and may or may not be resolved by research, no matter how diligent. Effort, time, and judgment, as well as sufficient subject-specific comprehension and adequate reserves of general historical knowledge are the tools necessary for questioning and evaluating traces.

[108] In this respect, note the longstanding friction between factions in the medical historical community, which occasionally erupts in the pages of the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* or at annual meetings of the American Association for the History of Medicine. Some members believe that a historian cannot really "do" history of medicine without the medical knowledge gained by attending medical school and taking an MD. Others believe that members with only an MD lack the historical understanding and perspective that the field requires, which is, they believe, incomplete without a PhD in history. For an example of a heated exchange, see *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 34 (October 1979): 458. For parallels in the history of science community, see Cook, "The Archivist: Link Between Scientist and Historian," 374. See also Thomas Kuhn, "The Relations Between History and History of Science," *Daedalus* 100, no. 2 (Spring 1971): 276–77; and Charles E. Rosenberg, "News of the Profession: Oswei Temkin," *Isis* 95, no. 3 (2004): 452.

[109] Jorge Luis Borges, "The Aleph," in *Collected Fictions* (New York: Penguin, 1999), 272–74. Borges, in addition to his other accomplishments, was a librarian. His works sometimes incorporate fantasies about classifying or retrieving the totality of knowledge. See also "The Library of Babel," *Collected Fictions,* 112–18.

[110] Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The House of the Seven Gables* (New York: Norton Critical Edition, 1967), 91. The novel was originally published in 1851. Holgrave's extravagant claim had at least one parallel in real life. Daguerreotypist Albert Southworth felt that through "discipline of mind and vision" he had acquired "another sense. . .unfelt and unknown to the uninitiated," which allowed him to understand better than others whatever he was seeing. Albert Sands Southworth, "An Address to the National Photographic Association" (1870), *Philadelphia Photographer* 8, no. 94 (October 1871): 322.

For archivists, uncovering (or recovering) layers of meaning and providing better services are the possible rewards. The pursuit of history is an art, whereby "multihued facts" are assembled into "a meaningful design" using "skill, sympathy, and sensitive caution."[111] It may be that the historian's greatest asset "is not the documents. . .but the degree of interest and of cooperation manifested by archivists."[112] Fuller and more fertile approaches to using historical photographs in conjunction with archival records, manuscripts, artifacts, and informants may be analogous to the kind of "thick description" envisioned by anthropologist Clifford Geertz ("an elaborate venture *in*"), accomplished only by getting inside the complex mesh of context.[113]

Obviously, archivists can extend the suggestions presented here to a variety of endeavors, including those far-removed from the history of medicine. Orphaned historical photographs and other documents are regularly used (and often misused) in a wide spectrum of biographies, monographs, advertisements, exhibits, Web sites, and other publications. Others languish neglected or lie obscure, their secrets locked because the keys to understanding them have never been found or remain to be turned. What we can know (and how we know it) is notoriously elusive, and perhaps the highest goal that history can attain is a refinement of debate.[114] But those archivists who are willing and prepared to "venture in" will come closer than others to the informed assessment and effective use of information.

[111] Philip D. Jordan, "The Scholar and the Archivist—A Partnership," *American Archivist* 31 (January 1968): 64.

[112] Jordan, "The Scholar and the Archivist," 59. Similarly, historian Alfred Rollins chastised archivists for providing insufficient guidance to historians and being "too detached and neutral." Alfred B. Rollins, Jr., "The Historian and the Archivist," *American Archivist* 32 (October 1969): 370.

[113] Clifford Geertz, "Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," in *The Interpretation of Culture,* ed. Clifford Geertz (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 3–30 (emphasis in original). The philosopher Gilbert Ryle coined the term "thick description." David Macey, *The Penguin Dictionary of Critical Theory* (London: Penguin Books, 2000), 380. Techniques useful in anthropology for an "imaging process" that results in "thick description" and "broadens the ethnographic inquiry" are described in Wilbert Reuben Norman, Jr., "Photography as a Research Tool," *Visual Anthropology* 4, no. 2 (1991): 196.

[114] Geertz himself has questioned "the very possibility of unconditioned description." *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1988), 141–44. Issues related to the "authorial presence within the text," as it applies to archival description, are discussed in Schwartz, "Coming to Terms with Photographs," 159. The crisis of representation that pervades recent anthropological discourse, as it applies to archival practice, is addressed in Elisabeth Kaplan, " 'Many Paths to Partial Truths': Archives, Anthropology, and the Power of Representation," *Archival Science* 2, nos. 3–4 (2002): 209–20. On the impact of Geertz, see Richard A. Shweder and Byron Good, eds., *Clifford Geertz by His Colleagues* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). For discussion of the self-reflexive path of anthropology in recent decades, see James Clifford, *On the Edges of Anthropology: Interviews* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003).

Appendix: Massachusetts General Hospital Archives and Special Collections Inventory Sheet for Use with Photographs

1. Catalog number. Indicate size of image. Is it framed?
2. Accessioned with what other material? (Give accession number, circumstances of accession, description of accompanying material, and donor or office of origin, if known.)
3. Title.
4. General narrative description of image.
5. Subject added entries.
6. Personal name added entries.
7. Medium or photographic process. (Most questions will be answered by using the identification chart in James M. Reilly, *Care and Identification of 19th-Century Photographic Prints* (Rochester: Eastman Kodak, 1986) and magnification at 10x.)
8. Photographer, or studio, if known.
9. History of use, if known. (Include exhibits, textbooks, monographs, articles, television programs, Web sites, etc., with dates.)
10. Image is available in what formats? (Include negatives, prints, digital formats, transparencies, etc.)
11. Copyright data, if known.
12. Does it depict artifacts still existing in collections? Which ones? Location?
13. Associated notes or captions. (Did the photographer write them? Or did a previous owner? Archives staff? Volunteers?)
14. Linking note. (Indicate associated images.)
15. Location of image in storage.

Philatelic Materials in Archival Collections: Their Appraisal, Preservation, and Description

Peter J. Roberts

Abstract

Many archival collections contain significant quantities of material related to postage stamps and postal history. Many philatelists are interested in researching them. This paper reviews some of the issues surrounding the disposition of philatelic materials and provides guidance for archivists in appraising, preserving, and describing them.

Appraisal of Philatelic Material

Philatelic materials, which include postage stamps and postally used covers,[1] are found in most archives and often are a significant component of manuscript collections. Archivists often discard envelopes to reduce the bulk of voluminous collections or because they do not consider envelopes worth keeping.[2] In some instances, the address and date information on the cover is lightly penciled onto the manuscript and enclosed in square brackets. It is, however, a misconception that postal covers lack archival value and therefore fail to merit retention. The determination whether or not to retain philatelic materials depends on the type of archival repository, the archivist's appraisal philosophy, and the ranking given to the appraisal criteria employed.

Despite the fact that archivists often discard envelopes, repositories may, nevertheless, hold philatelic materials. Most commonly, archives retain entire

[1] In philately, a *cover* is any postally used envelope, folded letter sheet, postal card, or other piece of postal stationery.

[2] Two manuals recommending disposal of envelopes are Jane Boley, Marcelle Hull, Shirley Rodnitzky, and Gerald D. Saxon, *Archives and Manuscripts Processing Manual* (Arlington: The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries, 1995), 28; and Lillian Bickerton, Leonard DeLozier, and Linda Johnston, *A Manual for Small Archives* (Vancouver: Archives Association of British Columbia, 1988), 40. Regarding reasons for disposal, see J. Douglas Mattox, *Philatelic Gold in the Archives* (Raleigh, N.C., 1993), 1. The University of Wisconsin—Madison cites envelopes as an example of material with no informational value that should be discarded at http://archives.library.wisc.edu/transfer.html, accessed 16 February 2006.

record series rather than trying to identify individual files or documents of historical value, so philatelic materials make their way into many archival collections. Philatelic materials are mostly found as covers in the correspondence of manuscript collections. They are inseparable from most pre-1850s correspondence and are also found in archival records as revenue and fiscal stamps on legal documents and bills.

Philatelic materials may be found in personal papers and governmental or institutional records for other, less common, reasons. Occasionally, personal papers may include a donor's private stamp collection. If the individual was a philatelist (a specialist in the study of postage stamps, postal markings, or postal history), an important element of the papers may be the philatelic materials themselves and information that accompanies them. Some archival institutions collect postcards, many of which are postally used. In a few instances, the records of printing firms and the papers of designers, engravers, typographers, and printing salespeople contain stamp proofs.[3] Stamps overprinted or perforated with the word *Specimen* were sent between member countries of the Universal Postal Union to announce new stamp issues. Printing companies produced specimen stamps for design approval and presented them to important personalities and institutions. Postal administrations often issue stamps that honor a personality or subject directly related to an institution's archival holdings. As a result, these archives sometimes hold unique philatelic materials related to the stamp's creation, such as proposed designs or "essays," and materials surrounding the subsequent introduction of the approved stamp.[4]

The archivist's decision to save philatelic materials partly depends on whether he or she believes that the creator, the user, or society at large should determine the significance of the material. Archivists who take a macro-appraisal approach use functional analysis to determine archival value. Consequently, many of the record groups selected for retention may contain philatelic materials. They may then employ micro-appraisal criteria such as evidential value, use, scarcity, and informational value to determine what merits retention. The relative importance the archivist gives to those elements will alter his or her selection criteria in regard to philatelic materials.[5]

[3] Katherine Hamilton-Smith, "Postcard Collection Directory," electronic bulletin board, 13 April 1998, available at http://www.units.muohio.edu/mcs/univapps/netapps/listserv/, accessed 10 June 2005. Michael Laurence, "How Proofs and Essays Get into Collections," *Linn's Stamp News* (11 May 1987): 3.

[4] For instance, the Special Collections Department of Georgia State University holds the personal papers of lyricist Johnny Mercer that contain material related to the design of the Johnny Mercer stamp.

[5] Terry Cook, "Archival Appraisal and Collection: Issues, Challenges, New Approaches," Special Lecture Series, University of Maryland and National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Md., 22 April 1999, available at http://www.mybestdocs.com/cookt-nara-990421-2.htm, 4, 10, accessed 6 April 2006.

An institutional archives that focuses on accountability and the evidential value of its archival records may minimize the informational value of philatelic materials in its record management decisions. Alternatively, when public perception and institutional history are deemed important, institutions often establish visitor centers or institutional museums. In these or similar settings, philatelic resources can be helpful in communicating information about more mundane materials. The display of stamps and covers in exhibits helps unite contemporary records. For instance, a war-era manuscript shown with its stamped cover provides additional focus and context for the viewer. Some institutions effectively use philatelic materials to add color, interest, and life to an exhibit.[6] When the Center for the History of Chemistry opened, among other exhibits, a display of commemorative postage stamps honored chemists.[7] As part of its Cultural Olympiad, the Centennial Olympic Games featured an exhibit of historical memorabilia that incorporated a number of philatelic items.[8] The corporate archives of organizations such as Disney or Time-Warner may retain stamps that directly relate to its business.[9] Because the postal administration is an integral component of a country's government, philatelic materials in postal administration records are usually transferred to the country's national archives.

Some philatelic materials have enduring legal value. A cover provides legal evidence in cases where it is necessary to prove that a letter was mailed. The cover furnishes documentation that it was correctly addressed, had a return address, was not returned by the postal service, and had the proper postage. Such proof is *prima facie* evidence that the letter was received.[10] Postmarked covers have also provided legal evidence for claims of residence in immigration disputes.[11] DNA isolations from the gum of used stamps and covers can reveal

[6] Linda Wiler, e-mail message to author, 29 August 1995. The Southern Labor Archives exhibit *America United*, with a section on the American-Soviet space race, similarly benefited from the inclusion of a space stamp cover with a launch date special event cancellation.

[7] Richard J. Seltzer, "Center for History of Chemistry Inaugurated," *Chemical and Engineering News* 61 (4 April 1983): 26–29. Stamps "enhance the picture" of the subject of a collection. Thomas Wildenberg, "Re: Postage Stamps & Archives—Research," electronic bulletin board, 12 March 1998, available at http://www.units.muohio.edu/mcs/univapps/netapps/listserv/, accessed 13 June 2005.

[8] The Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games Cultural Olympiad, Olymphilex '96 / Stamps, Coins and Memorabilia, Atlanta, Georgia, 19 July to 3 August 1996.

[9] The subject areas sought in an archives' collecting policy may also include themes depicted on stamps. For example, it would be appropriate for the archives of the Walt Disney Company or Time-Warner Inc. to collect mint stamps depicting their characters or films. Dean DeBolt, "Re: Clarification on Stamps," electronic bulletin board, 12 March 1998, available at http://www.units.muohio.edu/mcs/univapps/netapps/listserv/, accessed 10 June 2005.

[10] "Proof of mailing by evidence of business or office custom" 45 *American Law Reports* (4th Series), 476. *Horton v. Allstate Insurance Company*, No. 68186, Court of Appeals of Georgia, 171 Ga. App. 707 (1984).

[11] One example is that of an illegal alien who was granted amnesty under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. Covers eventually shown to be properly postmarked and addressed to his New York residence proved he had lived in the United States for the required period of time. Ken Lawrence, "The Spotlight Is on Philately and the INS," *Scott Stamp Monthly* (September 1997): 34–35.

the identity of the person who licked the stamp and sealed the envelope. This information is helpful in paternity cases and genetic genealogy.[12]

Potential use of the materials by secondary users should be considered in archival appraisal. Stamp collecting is among the world's most popular hobbies.[13] Of approximately 1,450,000 stamp collectors in the United States, about 115,000 are considered serious collectors.[14] Over 43,000 people belong to the American Philatelic Society and 400 to the affiliated Postal History Society. The latter represents a fraction of the serious scholars currently conducting philatelic research in various archives worldwide. The wide popularity of stamp collecting and interest in philatelic research have led at least ten countries to establish national postal museums.[15]

Stamp collectors have produced philatelic literature since 1861 and today publish an estimated 750 journals, about 400 of which are devoted to specialized interests. Postal history, with its interest in covers, is a growing facet of philately. Philately constitutes a significant pastime for society and philatelists represent a large constituency who can, like genealogists, become vocal advocates of archives.[16] The significance of many philatelic materials in archival collections may seem arcane to archivists who are not conversant in philately.[17] This limitation can be overcome by consulting a postal historian who is likely to possess the knowledge to determine the importance of various types of philatelic materials. Such a dialogue would help archivists improve the description of philatelic materials in their collections and make them better known to the philatelic community.

[12] The success of DNA recovery depends on the storage condition and the age of the sample. Covers need to have been stored in a dark and dry place. A recovery success rate of about 50 percent has been reported by one laboratory for samples less than twenty years old, with the oldest successful recovery being from a fifty-five-year-old stamp. Thomas Krahn, "DNA from old stamps—Clarification," electronic bulletin board, 22 Mar 2005, available at http://Genealogy-DNA-L@rootsweb.com/, accessed 10 June 2005. See also, B. Hopkins, N. J. Williams, P. G. Debenham, and A. J. Jeffreys, "The use of Minisatellite Variant Repeat-Polymerase Chain Reaction (MVR-PCR) to Determine the Source of Saliva on a Used Postage Stamp," *Journal of Forensic Science* 39, no. 2 (March 1994): 526–31.

[13] David Straight, "Adding Value to Stamp and Coin Collections," *Library Journal* (1 June 1994): 75.

[14] Michael Lawrence, "Survey: Stamp Market Roared Back in 2004," *Linn's Stamp News* (13 June 2005), 3.

[15] In 2005, the U.S. National Postal Museum Library had 314 research appointments for external users and many more internal use requests. Paul McCutcheon, "Annual number of users?" e-mail message to author, 2 February 2006; Daniel Bayer, "National Postal Museums—How many?" e-mail message to author, 11 September 1995; Don Chafetz, "National Postal Museums—How many?" e-mail message to author, 12 September 1995; Arwel Parry, "National Postal Museums—How many?" e-mail message to author, 14 September 1995; Patrick Bonacker, "National Postal Museums—How many?" e-mail message to author, 14 September 1995; Allan Tuchman, "National Postal Museums—How many?" e-mail message to author, 14 September 1995; David Mills, "National Postal Museums—How many?" e-mail message to author, 14 September 1995.

[16] Bill Welch, "A Philatelist's Perspective," paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists, Washington, D.C., 31 August 1995. Gail R. Redmann, "Archivists and Genealogists: The Trend Toward Peaceful Coexistence," *Archival Issues* 18, no. 2 (1993): 126.

[17] Frank Boles, *Archival Appraisal* (New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc., 1991), 44.

Most archivists consider scarce records to be significant, and scarcity is an important element affecting selection.[18] Many archival collections contain rare philatelic materials that archivists have overlooked. Some archives with significant pre-twentieth-century manuscripts contain scarce philatelic materials that would reap millions of dollars on the philatelic market.[19] Indeed, many of the large "finds" or "caches" noted by the philatelic trade are purloined from archival material. The matter is important enough that rare postage stamps and related postal history materials have become the subject of new international laws and treaties.[20]

The use of postage stamps as a record of payment for mail delivery is fleeting.[21] The archival value of most philatelic materials is its informational value for users other than the creator of the covers. For these secondary users, philatelic materials retain their value over time because they contain information about topics that help define the history of a society and culture. The following examples highlight the informational value of philatelic materials and also serve as a guide to the types of philatelic materials that interest researchers and the types of materials that should be preserved.

Some postage and cover markings are important examples of mail service and so are valuable to understanding the history of postal systems.[22] Scholarly research using philatelic materials has made worthy contributions to the historical record that would not have been possible using traditional historical resources. For instance, stamps can bear symbols that are part of a national system of communication.[23] The study of Ottoman stamps helped recount the history of the Ottoman Empire's fiscal calendar.[24] Covers can reveal relevant historical information for biographies[25] and for the study of ethnic

[18] Boles, *Archival Appraisal*, 38, 46.

[19] Mattox, *Philatelic Gold in the Archives*, 1.

[20] Leo J. Harris, "Harvesting in Fields of Philately? Be Aware of the Legal Implications," *The American Philatelist* (March 1989): 230. The United States has bilateral agreements of replevin with Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, and Ecuador. The U.S. and sixty other nations have also subscribed to the UNESCO Convention of 1970 which prohibits the illicit import, export, and transfer of ownership of cultural property (which specifically includes philatelic material). Harris, "Harvesting in Fields of Philately?" 230–32.

[21] T. J. Collings and R. F. Schoolley, *The Care and Preservation of Philatelic Materials* (London: The British Library, 1989), 2.

[22] Ann E. Pederson and Sigrid McCausland, eds., *Keeping Archives* (Sydney : Australian Society of Archivists Inc., 1987), 151.

[23] Donald M. Reid, "The Symbolism of Postage Stamps: A Source for the Historian," *Journal of Contemporary History* 19, no. 2 (1984): 223–49.

[24] Richard B. Rose, "The Ottoman Fiscal Calendar," *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin* 25, no. 2 (1991): 163.

[25] Information on covers and postal cards helped Bill Welch to document Dr. Rolando Kuehn's varied activities on the Mosquito Coast. This information pointed him to areas he would never otherwise have considered investigating, e.g., several covers from Hawaii led to the link with King Kalakaua of Hawaii and the legendary Hawaiian missionary Father Damien de Veuster. Bill Welch, letter to author, 17 October 1995; Bill Welch, "The Bones of Rolando Kuehn," *The American Philatelist* (March 1993): 222.

migrations.[26] The time required to disseminate information among the medieval aristocracy can be gleaned from postal markings on European state letters.[27] Later postal markings supplement written accounts by providing dated records of the world's transportation history, including the mode and route of travel.[28]

Auxiliary markings on wartime covers can help researchers to better interpret correspondence. For instance, censor markings, "Free-POW Mail" hand stamps, preferential postal rates, and unusual mail routes provide clues of governmental or self-imposed censorship.[29] First and Second World War–era European covers occasionally provide information about the complicated and cumbersome schemes used to circumvent mail restrictions between warring nations. Organizations such as Thomas Cook and Son and the International Red Cross aided mail delivery by establishing forwarding facilities that worked with censors. In some instances, the covers, which were sometimes addressed to aliases, were sent to a forwarding agent at a designated postal box or dummy firm in a neutral country like Switzerland or Portugal. The mail was then transferred to the intended addressee.[30]

Dated correspondence and a cover's postal markings inform researchers about the lapse of time between when a letter was written, posted, and received at the destination post office. Mail delays can be determined by comparing a cover's postmark and backstamp.[31] Dated postal markings provide date information similar to time stamps often found on office records. Knowing when a stamp was issued can also assist a researcher in approximating the year of an undated letter. Furthermore, the dates of otherwise undated correspondence can be estimated from postage on a cover when the date stamp cannot be read. A processing archivist probably won't have the time to look up the postage stamps in a catalog, but a determined researcher undoubtedly will.

Some postal markings indicate the occurrence of severe weather conditions like snowstorms.[32] Other postmarks and stamps provide some insights into

[26] Alfred A. Gruber, "Tracing the Chinese in Mexico through Their Covers," *The American Philatelist* (June 1993): 568.

[27] James Mackay, *The Guinness Book of Stamps* (Middx, U.K.: Guinness Publishing: 1982) 43.

[28] Reid, "The Symbolism of Postage Stamps," 225.

[29] Louis Fiset, e-mail message to author, 5 December 1994.

[30] Thomas J. Gobby, "World War II Message Schemes," *The American Philatelist* (April 1988): 342–49.

[31] A *backstamp* is a postmark applied to the reverse of a cover of incoming mail to show date and time of receipt at the receiving post office.

[32] Randy Stehle, "Auxiliary Markings—Snow Delays," *La Posta: A Journal of American Postal History* (November 1995): 40–43. Turn-of-the-century backstamps in the U.S. and Mexico contained regional weather forecasts. Bob De Violini, "Weather Reports and Condition Cancellations?" electronic bulletin board, 13 December 1995, available from the author. Alfredo V. Basurto, "Mexican Weather Forecast 'Flag' Cancels," *The American Philatelist* (March 1994): 245–47.

popular culture and marketing.[33] Covers may include illustrations that provide important visual information to the historical record. For instance, Civil War–era covers occasionally have engravings of regimental encampments or patriotic cartoons.[34]

Other visual clues provide a record of the outbreaks of disease and acts of bioterrorism. Late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century covers with clipped corners or punched holes are often evidence that the contents were disinfected in an attempt to prevent the spread of diseases such as cholera, yellow fever, and bubonic plague. Envelopes mailed since November 2001 to the White House and congressional and other federal government offices have markings indicating they have been irradiated to destroy anthrax spores and ricin.

Other information may be gleaned from covers. Notations may indicate an address change or forwarding address. An enclosed manuscript may be continued on the back of the cover in the form of a postscript (P.S.) notation. Covers may contain other clues such as the use of the familiar "c/o" abbreviation to indicate if the addressee was residing in the care of another person.

Postal authorities frequently issue stamps to fulfill postage rates for special mail classifications. Special delivery, registered, certified, or insured stamps or markings provide researchers information regarding the importance of accompanying documents to the sender. Express mail or airmail stamps usually signify the sender's desire for faster conveyance despite the higher cost. The use of certain stamps indicates that the writer is in the armed services or mailed the letter from an occupied country. The use of official stamps indicates the correspondence is from a government office or agency.[35]

The placement of stamps on an envelope occasionally adds meaning to the accompanying correspondence. Stamps positioned upside down have been used to express anti-war sentiments and also love.[36] The scholar who edited the

[33] For instance, the nineteenth-century "Shoo Fly" cancellation from Waterbury, Connecticut, was inspired by a popular song of the day. Richard M. Cabeen, *Standard Handbook of Stamp Collecting* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1979), 138–39. Publicity slogans, often promoting tourism or special events, are often found on twentieth-century and later cancellations. Some French and Italian postmarks include commercial slogans for branded goods. Mackay, *The Guinness Book of Stamps*, 54–58. Italy and New Zealand have produced stamps with advertising on them. Mackay, *The Guinness Book of Stamps*, 123–24.

[34] William Stromberg, "The Large Regimental Patriotic Envelopes of the U.S. Civil War," *The American Philatelist* (July 1991): 614–16.

[35] Airmail stamps of other countries are identified by overprints or phrases in their design: "Poste Aerienne" (French), "Luftpost" (German), "Legiposta" (Hungarian), "Posta Aerea" (Italian), "Correio Aereo" (Portuguese), and "Correo Aereo" (Spanish). Similarly, official stamps are identified by "G" (for government—Canada), "Tjeneste" (Denmark), "Dienst" (Germany), "O.H.M.S." (for On His/Her Majesty's Service—Great Britain), "Service" (India), and "Officiel" (Switzerland). Michael Baadke, "Stamps that Fulfill Special Postal Services," *Linn's Stamp News* (30 March 1998), 46.

[36] During the antagonisms preceding the American Civil War, Southerners may have placed stamps upside down in support of secession. Gene Lightfoot, "Position on Envelope?" e-mail message to author, 13 December 1994. In protest against the Vietnam War, some dissenters also pasted U.S. stamps

letters of Sara Haardt and the American literary critic H. L. Mencken noted, ". . .most of them were mailed with the postage stamp carefully pasted upside down: a code which, in those days carried an additional message—that you were in love with the person you were sending your letter to."[37] If the archives had disposed of the covers such an observation would have been lost.

To identify the most important philatelic materials in their collections, archivists may survey their collections to determine if they contain significant stamps or covers. When dealing with the personal papers of a stamp collector, the archivist can make a quick note in the accession record that the collection may contain important materials if there is evidence that the donor was a member of a philatelic society or purchased materials at auction. Repositories should keep not only philatelic materials with informational value for traditional researchers but also those that are important to postal historians and philatelists. The following examples can guide archivists in making those appraisal and retention decisions.

The types of philatelic material of interest to philatelists or postal historians are not just the stamps themselves but also details such as color varieties of ink or paper, the earliest and latest dates a particular cancellation was used, or the route and rate required to send a cover through the mail. Stampless covers (stampless folded letters), cancellations and other postal markings, and indications of mail rates are most likely to be significant to postal historians and may indicate rare or expensive philatelic material.[38]

Most monetarily valuable philatelic material usually consists of stampless covers dating from the mid-seventeenth century to the 1850s when envelopes replaced stampless covers.[39] These letters often have written or hand-stamped markings indicating the originating post office, payment, routing, and postal recordkeeping information.[40] Noncircular postmarks on these covers are atypical and therefore often of more interest to postal historians.

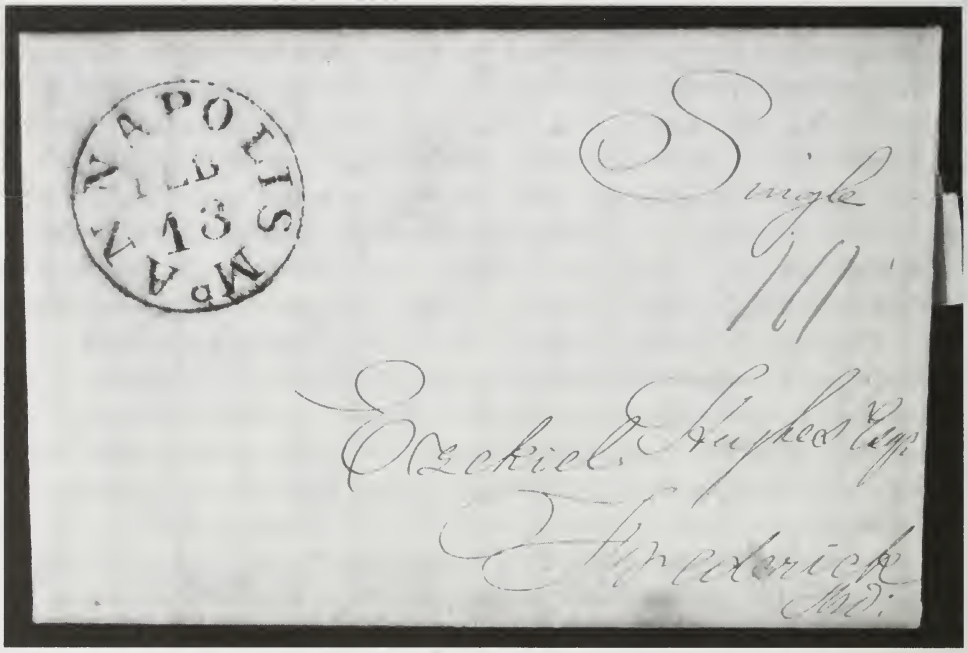
(and specifically flag stamps) upside down. Jeffrey N. Shapiro, letter to author, 27 December 1994, and Jill L. Schneider, "Re: Postage Stamps WILL Have Archival Value," electronic bulletin board, 16 March 1998, available at http://www.units.muohio.edu/mcs/univapps/netapps/listserv/, accessed 13 June 2005. Since the 1870s, the placement of stamps has developed into an elaborate symbolic language of courtship. M. Valencia and Donald Loker, "More Stamp Codes," *Linn's Stamp News* (16 March 1987), 4; George Ade, *Artie: A Story of the Streets and Town* (Chicago: Herbert S. Stone & Co., 1896), 18; John M. Hotchner, "What Is the Significance of Stamp Placement?" *Linn's Stamp News* (9 October 1995), 6; Jacob P. Busch, "Briefmarken-Sprache (Language of Postage Stamps)," *German Postal Specialist* (December 1991), 520; Werner Rittmeier, "Briefmarken der 50er Jahre grüβen," *Deutsche Briefmarken-Zeitung* 2 (1992): 126.

[37] Marion Elizabeth Rodgers, ed., *Mencken and Sara: A Life in Letters: The Private Correspondence of H. L. Mencken and Sara Haardt* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1987), 72; and Charles Antin, "Love Letter Code," *Linn's Stamp News* (9 February 1987), 4.

[38] Mattox, *Philatelic Gold in the Archives,* 2.

[39] Mackay, *The Guinness Book of Stamps,* 9.

[40] Most of these markings are in the country's native language or in French, the official language of the Universal Postal Union, which was founded in 1874. Noncircular handstamps (i.e., oval or irregular) are usually rarer. Mattox, *Philatelic Gold in the Archives,* 2–4.



Stampless cover from Annapolis to Frederick, Maryland. Stampless covers are typically folded letters with wax seals mailed before the issuance of postage stamps in 1847 and before the use of stamps became mandatory in 1856. The originating post office wrote or hand stamped its city name. If the postage was collected at the time of mailing, the letter was marked PAID, if not, payment was collected at time of delivery. *Courtesy National Postal Museum, Smithsonian Institution.*

The postal system has used a variety of markings to cancel stamps to confirm that the sender made proper payment for the mail's delivery and to ensure that postage stamps are not reused. These postmarks often indicate the time and place of origin, route, destination, and mode of transportation. Archivists should be aware of the more uncommon varieties that are of interest to philatelists and postal historians.[41] Noteworthy originating town marks include those of small towns, discontinued post offices, ghost towns, territories, manuscript cancels, and rural free delivery cancels. Some cancellations or cachets denote unusual post office locations like those in the air, aboard trains, buses, ships, and even on the sea floor.[42]

[41] Jeffrey N. Shapiro, "Uncommon Things to Look for on Common Covers," handout with letter to author, 6 December 1994.

[42] Just prior to World War I, the Deutsche Reichspost authorized the establishment of post offices on board the zeppelin airships. Simine Short, "Collecting Air Mail," *The American Philatelist* (October 1992): 925. In 1946, the U.S. Post Office Department and three airlines investigated the feasibility of processing the mail en route. Dan Barber, "Flying Post Office Proved Impractical," *Linn's Stamp News* (17 November 1986), 65. A history of the undersea post office is available in Harold G. D. Gisburn, *The Postage Stamps and Postal History of the Bahamas* (London: Stanley Gibbons Ltd., 1950), 105–7.

Steamboat cover from Philadelphia to Providence, Rhode Island. The U.S. Post Office officially recognized steamboat mail in 1825. The postmaster at the receiving post office paid the master of the steamboat two cents for each letter received, but this fee was not passed to the recipient. The steamboat hand stamp on this cover was in use from 1832 to 1852 and applied in was Providence where the letter entered the U.S. postal system. *Courtesy National Postal Museum, Smithsonian Institution.*

Other markings indicate the covers traveled to remarkable destinations like the North Pole, the Antarctic, and the moon.[43] Cover markings (and some stamps) may indicate unusual means of conveyance such as via tin can, pneumatic post, balloon, inland waterway, packet boat, steamboat, pony express, early railroad or airmail, and rocket.[44] Some postal markings indicate the route the mail traveled and its destination. These receiving marks indicate how long the letter was in transit and any changes in the route taken.

Some cancellations are distinctive for their visual appeal. Some postal clerks in the late nineteenth century created fanciful personal hand stamps for

[43] Dwight Eaves, "Deep Freeze Cover," *Linn's Stamp News* (11 August 1986), 48; Armand Singer, "Philately from Pole to Pole," *The American Philatelist* (March 1995): 196; "Postmark: The Moon," *Newsweek,* 24 July 1972, 74.

[44] During the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71), balloons reportedly carried about 2.5 million letters out of besieged Paris. These balloons also transported over 300 carrier pigeons to transport the return mail. An alternative means to get mail into the beleaguered city was to float the letters down the Seine, past Prussian marksmen, in hollow steel balls. The sharpshooters sank most of them and about a thousand letters have been recovered from sunken balls. Mackay, *The Guinness Book of Stamps,* 25. The first example of American balloon mail (now missing) dates from 1793 and was from George Washington. Short and Simine, "Collecting Air Mail," 922, 924. Steamboats transported a large quantity of North American mail during the mid-nineteenth century, later to be supplanted by the railroads. The variety of steamboat markings is reputed to be unequaled in any other area of U.S. postal history. James W. Milgram,

1887 railway post office fast mail cover to Louisville, Kentucky. A railway post office (RPO) was a railroad car, usually on a passenger train, where mail was sorted en route to speed delivery. Sorting mail aboard moving trains revolutionized mail processing. Profits from RPO contracts helped railroads subsidize a number of otherwise unprofitable passenger routes. Note the abstract added to the cover by the recipient to aid in retrieval from a pigeonhole desk or bundled correspondence. Such abstracts aid in understanding recordkeeping practice in the 19th century. *Courtesy National Postal Museum, Smithsonian Institution.*

cancellations such as geometrical figures like stars and concentric circles and organic designs like plant and animal forms, fraternal emblems, hearts, and shields. These uncommon and distinguishing stamp cancellations are of interest to many postal historians. Although U.S. postal regulations usually specified black ink for cancellations, some cities occasionally used red, blue, green, magenta, and, in extremely rare cases, orange or yellow.[45]

Postal historians are often interested in the various mail rates. Indications that the postage was temporarily changed, prepaid, or partially prepaid are noteworthy. Way markings indicate that a post rider accepted the letter along his route for deposit in the post office to which he was going. Some rates were short-lived and only used during wartime or other emergencies. Some people

"Steamboat Markings," *The American Philatelist* (June 1992): 550; *Vessel-Named Markings on United States Inland and Ocean Waterways 1810–1890* (Chicago: Collectors Club of Chicago, 1984). In 1939, Cuba issued a postage stamp for rocket mail. Three flights were conducted. In 1959, the U.S. Post Office Department sent mail from a submerged submarine via a guided missile to Mayport, Florida. The covers were then forwarded to members of Congress. Les Winick, "Taking Up Space," *The American Philatelist* (September 1993): 847–48.

[45] Cabeen, *Standard Handbook of Stamp Collecting*, 138; Jeffrey N. Shapiro, letter to author, 6 December 1994.

and organizations have free franking privileges allowing them to send mail without charge. Soldiers are often permitted free franking during wartime and some countries grant government and religious figures this privilege. One of the most common instances allows U.S. congressional representatives to use their signatures in place of the postage stamp on mail sent in the course of congressional business. Postal historians are also usually interested in instances of mixed frankings, where stamps from different countries were required to deliver a letter.

The addressee and return address can be important to some collectors and historians. Famous, historical, notorious, or exotic places and people may be of interest. Additionally, the envelope itself can be of a historical nature. For instance, during and shortly after the American Civil War, paper was in short supply. Envelopes were sometimes turned inside out for reuse or made from other materials such as wallpaper or bark.

The types of markings may be significant and include colonial, territorial, military, war, early western or U.S. overland mail routings, forwarding agent, private post, official, and governmental. Any foreign destination routed to the United States is important, especially those with non-European origins; or foreign destinations routed to Europe, especially those with non–North American origins.[46]

Stamps that are torn, missing perforations, heavily stained by cancellations, or printed somewhat off center are of little value to collectors unless they are considered rare.[47] One notable exception is stamps on "crash covers" that survived transportation accidents such as plane crashes and ship sinkings. These items are often torn or missing stamps and usually have smoke or water damage.[48] They pose difficult preservation problems, yet their proper care and retention are justified since they typically represent a powerful, tangible, and visual record of an important and horrific event. Stamps with pin and staple holes are also of little value, except for those with perfins, perforated designs or lettering to deter their unauthorized use. Most of these nineteenth-century imperforate stamps are highly collectible.[49]

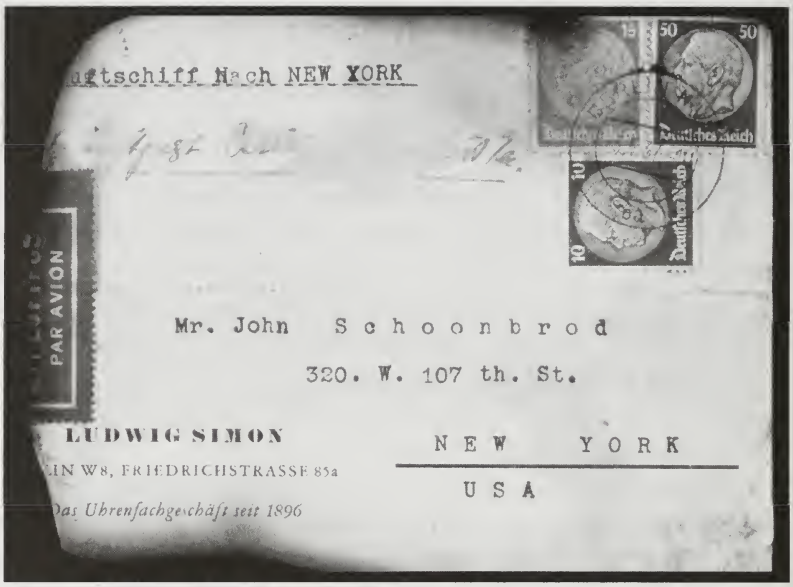
Archives wishing to attract philatelic researchers must appeal to their areas of interest. Besides covers, philatelists are also interested in information about important stamp collectors, dealers, authors, publishers, and exhibitors. They

[46] J. Douglas Mattox, letter to author, 22 April 1992; conference handout, Society of American Archivists, Washington D.C., 31 August 1995.

[47] If the design is centered so poorly that the perforations fail to even touch the margins then the stamp becomes a valuable and highly collectable "freak." John Sicker, "Collectors Should Seek Best Centering Possible," *Linn's Stamp News* (9 March 1987), 68.

[48] Two notable references regarding crash covers are Carl W. Ehlerding, "Wreck Covers Ship and Air," *The American Philatelist* (June 1959) and Adrian E. Hopkins, *A History of Wreck Covers* (London: Robson Lowe Ltd., 1970). See also Collings and Schoolley-West, *The Care and Preservation of Philatelic Materials*, 3.

[49] John Sicker, "Collectible Copies Require Undamaged Perforations," *Linn's Stamp News* (16 March 1987), 54.



One of 347 crash covers salvaged from the 1937 Hindenburg zeppelin disaster in Manchester, New Jersey. Accidents were a regular occurrence during the earliest days of airmail transport. Postal authorities would usually apply a postal marking to the cover explaining the delay and damage. Crash covers are tangible artifacts of tragic events. *Courtesy National Postal Museum, Smithsonian Institution.*

seek manuscript materials related to postal employees and private mail carriers.[50] One emerging research area is historic philately, which is best described as the ". . .study of some stamp, card, or cover that relates to, or helps us to understand, an event, person, or era in history. In other words, it is the use of a philatelic item to illustrate history."[51] Fiscal stamps and related documents provide valuable information for the growing field of revenue philately.[52]

Preservation of Philatelic Materials

While many of the standard preservation measures should be followed in caring for philatelic materials, unique concerns also need to be addressed. Most postage stamps are inherently unstable because they are frequently manufactured using highly acidic paper. More varieties of paper have been used in the production of stamps than in any other specialized field of printing. Postage stamps are produced with little concern for permanence. Not only are many stamps made of

[50] Welch, "A Philatelist's Perspective."

[51] Albro T. Gaul, "Historic Philately Is Not Postal History," *The American Philatelist* (September 1990): 818.

[52] David R. Beech, "British Library Unique Resource for Research," *The American Philatelist* (July 1995): 597; Welch, "A Philatelist's Perspective."

acidic paper with destructive additives and coatings, but they usually have acidic gum adhesives, and some stamps and covers are also printed with harmful inks and dyes. In general, philatelic materials should be housed in chemically inert enclosures (such as Melinex) or neutral pH ones.[53] Archivists and researchers should always use stamp tongs to handle stamps and clean cotton gloves to handle envelopes. Powder-free latex gloves or finger cots may also be used.[54] When possible, do not separate panes, blocks, strips, or pairs of stamps. Intact instances of these can be very rare among the early issues and are thus more collectible and valuable.[55] Since most commercially available philatelic album pages and stock books are acidic,[56] archival enclosures should be used for stamps and covers. Loose stamps and those stored in glassine envelopes should be transferred to archival stamp stock books or archival enclosures. Older collections are often mounted with acidic glassine stamp hinges to acidic paper. If warranted, these collections may be photocopied or filmed to record their original arrangement and then removed from the pages to avoid further damage. Interest is growing in some of the earliest stamp albums, philatelic books, and catalogs, which should either be retained or donated to a philatelic research library.[57]

Glassine stamp hinges should never be employed to mount mint stamps since they will damage the gum. Stamps in albums should instead be individually mounted using inert plastic stamp enclosures.[58] Covers and other large

[53] Collings and Schoolley-West, *The Care and Preservation of Philatelic Materials,* 2, 3, 7, 19.

[54] George Saqqal, "How To Preserve Stamps and Covers," *The American Philatelist* (February 1996): 125.

[55] T. N. Trikilis, *Stamps for the Investor* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1981), 104–5.

[56] The results of a testing program by an independent testing laboratory have shown approximately 55 percent of the philatelic album pages then available on the market had an unacceptably high acidity level (a pH of less than 6.5). After accelerated aging tests (equivalent to 150 years), only approximately 27 percent of the album pages had a pH above 6.5. Only 8 percent fell within 6.5 and 7.5 before and after accelerated aging. Arthur Salm Foundation,. *Report Number 1* (Chicago: Collectors Club of Chicago, March 1991); Arthur Salm Foundation, *Report Number 2* (Chicago: Collectors Club of Chicago, 1992); Arthur Salm Foundation, *Report Number 3* (Chicago: Collectors Club of Chicago, April 1995);. Collings and Schoolley-West, *The Care and Preservation of Philatelic Materials,* 41–42.

[57] A review of notable early stamp albums appears in Bill Welch, "America's First Stamp Album Celebrates Its 125th Birthday," *American Philatelist* (December 1987): 1134. The American Philatelic Library collects photographs, scrapbooks, medals, catalogs, books, and periodicals. It is especially interested in post office publications, maps, and rate charts, as well as in manuscript collections of important philatelists, dealers, and publishers. Welch, "A Philatelist's Perspective."

[58] John Sicker, "Mounts Showcase Stamps without Disturbing Gum," *Linn's Stamp News* (22 June 1987), 46. Appropriate plastic stamp enclosures should have a nonabrasive surface and be free of chlorinated compounds, external plasticisers, surface coatings, slip agents, UV inhibitors, adsorbents, and solvent activity. Most commercial brands, in fact, do not meet all these criteria. Collings and Schoolley-West, *The Care and Preservation of Philatelic Materials,* 42–45; Fred Korr, "Philatelic Preservation," *The American Philatelist* (April 1996): 298. A preferred plastic is polyester in an uncoated, biaxially oriented, polished form. Other recommended plastics include archival polypropylene, archival polystyrene, and polyethylene without additives. Thomas O. Taylor, "Protective Plastic Films in Philately: How Do We Find 'The Right Stuff'?" *The American Philatelist* (March 1988): 234.

materials may be encapsulated using an archival plastic film.[59] At least one archival supply company has now recognized the need for specialized storage products for philatelic materials.[60]

Philatelic materials ideally should be stored at 30%R.H. and 50°F (10°C); however, most damaging molds can be avoided if stamps are stored in an environment of less than 65%R.H. and below 64°F (18°C). Molds prefer static air conditions, therefore some air circulation should be provided during long-term storage. If high R.H. is unavoidable, archival Mylar should be used to interleave sheets or blocks of gummed stamps so they do not fuse together.[61]

Security is also an important facet of preservation. Archival collections with valuable or coveted philatelic materials can pose serious safekeeping problems. If an archives decides to keep covers and stamps with significant monetary value, then sufficient measures should be exercised to protect them from theft. The American Library Association's Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS) Security Committee states that permanently marking special collection materials is essential since it provides a visible deterrent to thieves and allows administrators to positively identify recovered stolen property.[62] In keeping with these guidelines, many rare book librarians carefully place neat and discreet ownership marks in their books, but this practice is debated since it usually reduces the book's monetary value.[63] Similarly, any alteration, repair, or almost any mark that is made to philatelic materials will significantly reduce their monetary value. Placing ownership marks on philatelic materials or intentionally damaging them by some other means to deter theft is not advisable since archivists are ethically bound to guard their materials against defacement and physical damage.[64]

The preferred measure for protecting significantly valuable philatelic materials is to scan, photograph, or microfilm them to record unique postmarks,

[59] Archival plastics are clear, colorless polyethylene terephthalate films such as Dupont's Mylar D and ICI's Melinex 16 or equivalent. Korr, "Philatelic Preservation."

[60] *Gaylord Archival Storage Materials and Conservation Supplies Catalog* (Fall 1995), 40.

[61] Collings and Schoolley-West, *The Care and Preservation of Philatelic Materials*, 22, 24, 32–33; Saqqal, "How To Preserve Stamps and Covers," 127.

[62] "Guidelines for the Security of Rare Book, Manuscript, and Other Special Collections," Appendix I, *C&RL News* 51 (March 1990): 240–44; Susan M. Allen, "Marking Rare Books," electronic bulletin board, 25 July 1995, available at http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/byform/mailing-lists/exlibris/, accessed 19 July 2005.

[63] Wayne Hammond, "Marking Rare Books," electronic bulletin board, 26 July 1995, available at http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/byform/mailing-lists/exlibris/, accessed 19 July 2005; Harvey Tucker "Marking Rare Books," electronic bulletin board, 26 July 1995, available at http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/byform/mailing-lists/exlibris/, accessed 19 July 2005; and Margaret Vanhove, "Marking Rare Books," e-mail message to author, 25 July 1995.

[64] Council of the Society of American Archivists, *Code of Ethics for Archivists*, Section VIII (Chicago: The Society of American Archivists 2005).

centering, and perforation details. These materials could also be segregated from the collections into a more secure area and used by researchers under more restricted conditions.[65] To protect the condition of the originals further, high-grade surrogate copies can be made for reference purposes to reduce handling.[66] When it is necessary to separate a cover from a manuscript collection, a photocopy surrogate of the cover should remain with the original manuscripts, thus enabling the maintenance of the collection's original order.[67] To aid postal historians, the original cover should also be accompanied by a photocopy of the original correspondence. High-grade surrogates may provide researchers acceptable reference copies while promoting the original's preservation by reducing its handling.

Description of Philatelic Materials

Because archivists have traditionally ignored the cultural significance of the postal system,[68] many archival collections containing philatelic materials are inadequately described to attract the attention of postal historians. As a result, postal historians tend to conduct their research primarily at home using collected examples.[69] Manuscript collections remain the greatest untapped postal history resource. Given the belief that archival programs will improve when more segments of the public learn about and can access them, it behooves archivists to retain and improve access to their philatelic holdings.[70] The Postal History Project, which catalogs postal history material at the North Carolina State Archives, is one model that could be emulated by other repositories.[71] Finding aids should describe noteworthy materials adequately enough to allow philatelic researchers to locate these resources. By creating a record of the existence of important philatelic materials within a collection, these descriptions will also provide some degree of security for those materials.

[65] "Guidelines for the Security of Rare Book, Manuscript, and Other Special Collections," 242; Allen, "Marking Rare Books."

[66] Collings and Schoolley-West, *The Care and Preservation of Philatelic Materials,* 4.

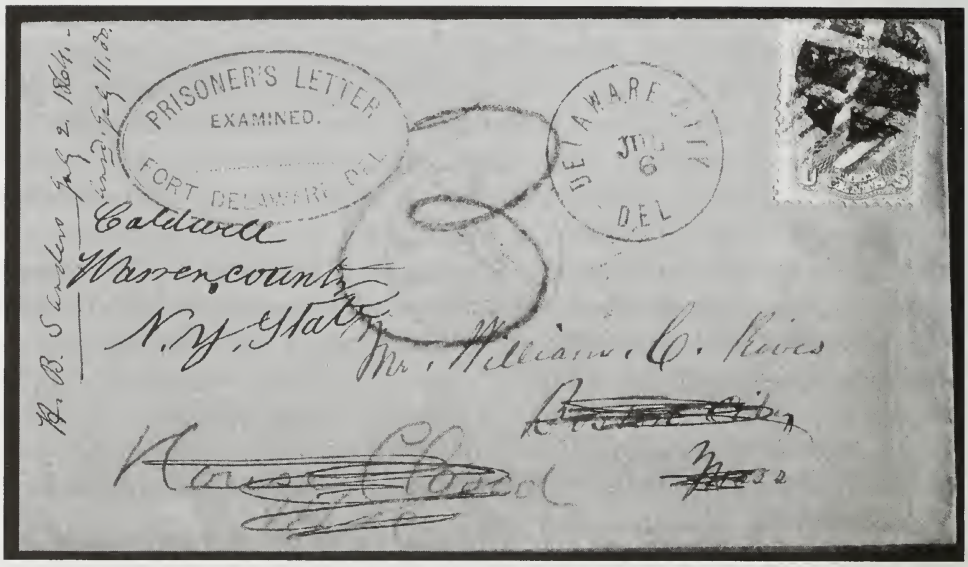
[67] Cimon Morin, letter to author, 31 January 1995. If surrogate copies are impractical, the archivist should use a dated cross-reference or separation sheet to note the original cover's location.

[68] Peter J. Wosh, "Going Postal," *American Archivist* 61 (Spring 1998): 222.

[69] Welch, "A Philatelist's Perspective."

[70] Philip F. Mooney, "Modest Proposals: Marketing Ideas for the Expansionist Archives," in *Advocating Archives: An Introduction to Public Relations for Archivists,* ed. Elsie Freeman Finch (Metuchen, N.J.: The Society of American Archivists and Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1994); Elsie F. Freivogel, "Wider Use of Historical Records," *American Archivist* 40 (July 1977): 333.

[71] A description of the North Carolina Archives Postal History Project is available at http://www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/archives/postal/default.htm, accessed 19 July 2005.

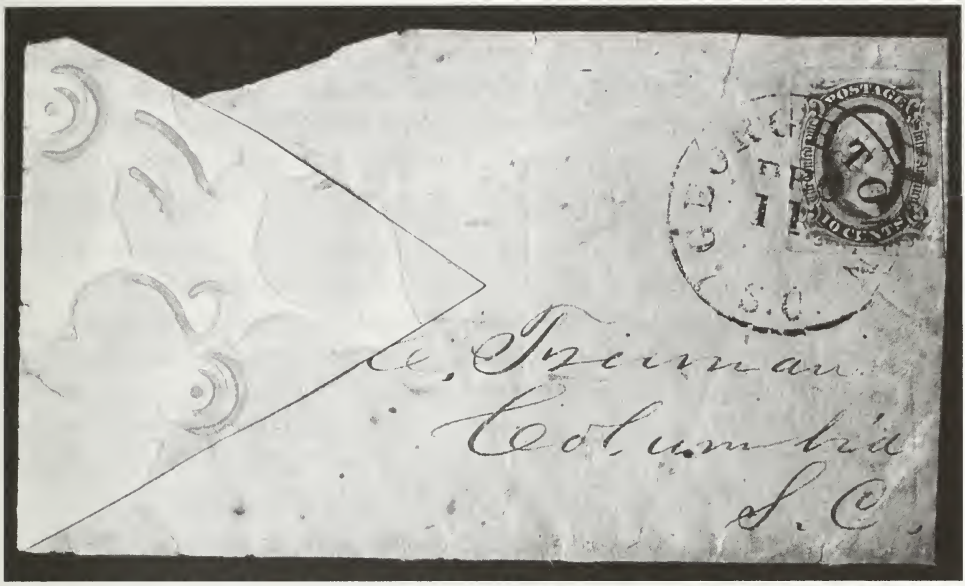


July 1864 prisoner of war cover from Fort Delaware, Maryland. A prisoner's cover was usually marked "examined" to note that prison officials had reviewed it. *Courtesy National Postal Museum, Smithsonian Institution.*

The primary reference tools for describing archival collections are collection-level catalog records and finding aid inventories. Like other components of archival collections, philatelic materials should be described by group rather than item-by-item. In catalog records, archivists should employ controlled vocabulary subject terms and use scope and general content notes to identify significant collections with important philatelic materials. In inventories or other finding aids, more detailed scope and content notes can be employed to identify the series in which philatelic materials are found, to narrow the search to a small portion of a large collection.

On-line access to postal history and stamps in archival collections has been limited by the number of archival collections identified as containing philatelic materials. A search of RLIN and OCLC's WorldCat retrieved fewer than a hundred archival collections identified as containing noteworthy philatelic materials, which is certainly a gross underrepresentation of the actual number of collections containing postal history.

The MARC 655 field employs authority-controlled descriptive terms indicating the form, genre, and/or physical characteristics of the materials being described. The *Library of Congress Thesaurus for Graphic Materials* has a very limited number of descriptive terms, including *postage stamps, postal cards,* and *postal stationery.* The Getty *Art and Architecture Thesaurus* is somewhat more inclusive, providing terms such as *postage stamps, precancels, airmail stamps, postage due stamps, special delivery stamps, philately, postal cards, aerogrammes, cancellations,* and



Confederate adversity cover made from wallpaper. By the end of the Civil War, paper was in short supply in the South. Letters and envelopes were fashioned from whatever was available including ledger sheets, printed circulars, maps, and book flyleaves and title pages. *Courtesy National Postal Museum, Smithsonian Institution.*

cancellation marks.[72] Because 1,700 different philatelic books have been cataloged, the *Library of Congress Subject Headings* provides the best resource for controlled-vocabulary general subject terms to describe the wide variety of philatelic materials important to most postal historians. Since 2002, established LC subject headings may be used as genre headings in the 655 field. These headings contain an assortment of narrower subject terms under postage stamps and postal service and a limited number of narrower terms for cancellations, envelopes, and postal stationery.

The scope and general content of the philatelic materials in a collection should be noted in the MARC 520 field. The level of detail in this collection summary may vary depending on the audience, thus it allows for an adequate description of those materials of interest to a postal historian. The Postal History Project at the North Carolina State Archives provides some additional keywords for field 520 that were found useful in describing items in that collection, including *4-bar* [cancels], *colonial, Confederate, Doane* [cancels], *Federal, flag* [cancels], *folded letter, meter* [stamps], *perfin, postmark, railroad* [post offices], and *registered.*[73]

[72] The Getty Museum's Art and Architecture Thesaurus Online is available at http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/aat/, accessed 17 February 2006.

[73] The North Carolina Archives Postal History Project is available at http://www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/archives/postal/default.htm, accessed 19 July 2005.

Other keywords of importance to some collectors include *slogan* [cancels], *pictorial* [cancels], *maritime, first flight,* and *war censor markings.* Illustrations to help archivists identify most of these specialized terms are easily available via Web search engines such as Google Images or Yahoo Images.

The following are two hypothetical examples of collection-level MARC records containing descriptions of philatelic items likely to be of interest to a postal historian.

Example 1:

520 Personal papers of the Dekle family of Mobile, Alabama. The collection includes letters written during the American Civil War between Maud Dekle and her son Joseph Dekle, who was a Confederate officer and prisoner of war. . . . The correspondence describes . . . and includes Confederate postmaster provisional stamps from Mobile, Alabama, patriotic covers, adversity covers, and prisoner of war covers with examiner handstamps from Fort Delaware, Delaware.
651 0 United States - - History - - Civil War, 1861–1865 - - Postal service.
655 0 Rare postage stamps |z Confederate States of America.
655 0 Imperforates (Philately) |z Confederate States of America.
655 0 Handstamps (Philately) |z Confederate States of America.
655 0 Franking privilege |z Confederate States of America.
655 0 Covers (Philately) |z Confederate States of America.
655 7 Postage stamps |z Confederate States of America |y 19th century. |2 lctgm
655 7 Cancellations |z Delaware |z Fort Delaware |y 19th century. |2 aat
655 7 Cancellations |z Alabama |z Mobile |y 19th century. |2 aat

Example 2:

520 The collection consists of Taylor's personal papers from his career in commercial design. . . . Included are United States airmail stamp designs, first flight covers, wreck covers, and mobile post office covers in Georgia.

545 Campbell F. Taylor (1906–1980) was a commercial designer and local historian. He founded Taylor Made Graphics in 1930, and retired in 1961. His commissions were primarily for the railroad and airline travel industry, and included postage stamp designs. He served as director of the Clayton County Historical Society (1964–1967) and president of the Georgia Postal History Society (1974–1976).

650 0 Stamp collectors |z Georgia.
650 0 Postage stamp design |z United States.
650 0 Mobile post offices |z Georgia.
650 0 Railway mail service |z Georgia.
650 0 Air mail service |z United States.
655 0 Essays and proofs (Philately) |z United States.
655 0 Handstamps (Philately) |z Georgia.
655 0 Covers (Philately) |z United States.

655 0 Wreck covers (Philately) |z United States.
655 0 Postage stamps |z United States.
655 0 Aerogrammes |z United States.
655 7 Postal stationery |z United States |y 20th century. |2 |ctgm
655 7 Cancellations |z Georgia |y 20th century. |2 aat

Like a catalog record, a finding aid inventory is also a summary description of a collection. However, the scope and general content notes of an inventory allow for more expansive description of components such as philatelic materials. To narrow a researcher's search to a small portion of a large collection, the scope and content notes can identify the series in which particular types of materials are generally found. When appropriate, notes on philatelic materials can be included in series descriptions to help users identify the containers that include relevant philatelic materials.

The following is an example of an expanded scope and content note for an inventory.

Example 3:

> The collection consists of Taylor's personal papers from his career in commercial design. . . . The Career series includes proposed and approved logos for Eastern Airlines and Amtrak as well as proofs and essays for three United States airmail stamps. . . . The Clubs and Societies series includes papers related to his activities with the Clayton County Historical Society and the Georgia Postal History Society as well as his collection of Georgia postal history which includes 32 first flight covers, 2 wreck covers, and over 50 covers from his philatelic exhibit on mobile post offices in Georgia.

The following are examples of philatelic materials described in two series descriptions. The first describes revenue stamps within a legal documents series, and the second describes philatelic material in a correspondence series.

Example 4:

> Series VI. Legal Documents and Contracts, 1863–1910
> Arranged chronologically by record type.
> Miscellaneous legal documents comprising deeds to property, loans, and wills. . . . Included are mortgage, power of attorney, conveyance, life insurance, and probate of will revenue stamps, 1863–71. . . .
> Box 1, Folder 2: Pine Valley Plantation mortgage, 1867.

Example 5:

> Series IV. Correspondence, 1850–1910
> Arranged chronologically.
> This series consists of incoming correspondence pertaining entirely to the business of the Mercer Cotton Company; agreements from Glasgow

merchants to purchase bales . . . . Included are blockade runner, express company, and mixed franking covers.
Box 3, Folder 5: Dugald McPhail Ltd., 1860–68.

Disposition Issues

At the 1994 Society of American Archivists conference, a philatelic broker spoke to the Acquisition and Appraisal Section citing security concerns and fund raising as reasons for archives to sell rare and expensive philatelic items. An archivist in the audience lamented that he inherited a manuscript collection in which a former librarian had cut out all stamps from the covers and sold them at auction to raise funds for the archives.[74] At least one institution has argued that it is common practice for manuscript repositories to sell accumulations of envelopes and deposit the proceeds into an endowment that supports other parts of the collection.[75]

Manuscript repositories have a variety of policies for dealing with philatelic materials found in their collections. At the National Archives of Canada, textual record acquisition sections routinely transfer covers and other philatelic material to the Canadian Postal Archives.[76] At the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, postal covers are sent to the museum.[77] At one repository, a postal historian convinced the archivist of the philatelic research value of its covers, and the repository now retains many of the covers it formerly discarded.[78]

Archivists collect and preserve original materials with informational value and provide them to researchers. Archivists do not make copies of autographed letters or important documents and sell the originals to manuscript collectors as a means of generating revenue, and the same rationale should apply to philatelic material. Processing manuals should be amended to specify that covers and other philatelic materials be retained unless the curator has made a carefully considered judgment to dispose of them.[79]

[74] Peter J. Wosh, "Postage Stamps and Archives—Research," electronic bulletin board, 12 March 1998, available at http://www.units.muohio.edu/mcs/univapps/netapps/listserv/, accessed 19 July 2005.

[75] Larry P. Alford to Patricia C. Crawford, memorandum, 19 August 1991, Davis Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Conference handout, Society of American Archivists, Washington, D.C., 31 August 1995.

[76] Cimon Morin, letter to author, 31 January 1995.

[77] Kathryn Stallard, "Stamps," e-mail message to author, 16 November 1994.

[78] Karyl Winn, "Philatelic Materials," e-mail message to author, 16 November 1994, and Louis Fiset, "Philatelic Materials in Archives," e-mail message to author, 5 December 1994.

[79] The processing manual for the Beinecke Library provides a good example to follow, available at http://www.library.yale.edu/beinecke/manuscript/process/vii.html#VII.M.%20Envelopes, accessed 6 April 2006.

Many philatelic researchers claim that it is easier to pursue their subject by collecting examples themselves, rather than trying to locate and study them in an archives.[80] In fact, most research involving nineteenth- and twentieth-century philatelic materials derives from personal collections.[81] Many collectors believe that preserving postal history in archives keeps important material out of circulation.[82] But disbursing these collections to the open market disenfranchises postal historians of the important informational resources that archives offer. Philatelic research is actually hampered when key materials are closeted in private hands. Materials in a public archives comprise a shared cultural patrimony for the appreciation, research, and education of everyone, not just for the private study of those who can afford to purchase them. As one noted philatelist rhetorically asked, "Should we study these items in the privacy of our stamp dens, to the exclusion of historians and others in the country in which they were found?"[83]

Archives should not sell stamps or covers that fall within an institution's scope of collection that might be important to a community's heritage or history, or that might be of literary or historical research value.[84] Furthermore, the sale of archival materials may create mistrust among donors. Even when such sales are permitted, some public institutions may require that surplus inventories be disposed of through government surplus and that the income be returned to the institutions' general fund without directly benefiting the archives. Thus, many archives discover that it is not worthwhile to sell philatelic material.[85] Still, a few archives choose to sell selected philatelic materials with professional guidance.[86] In some cases, their actions generate rich financial rewards that benefit their primary collecting areas. Such endeavors must elicit the same admonitions that would the sale of materials from any archival or

[80] Welch, "A Philatelist's Perspective."

[81] David Moltke-Hansen, "Posting to the Bank with All Deliberate Speed: Recent Handling of Philatelic and Numismatic Sales for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Manuscripts Department," paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists, Washington, D.C., 31 August 1995.

[82] Welch, "A Philatelist's Perspective."

[83] Harris, "Harvesting in Fields of Philately?" 230.

[84] Alford to Crawford, memorandum.

[85] Georgia State University, Business Services, Policies and Procedures, available at http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwpch/PropertyControlPolicies.htm#300121, accessed 22 November 2006; Moltke-Hansen, "Posting to the Bank with All Deliberate Speed." The Special Collections Department of East Carolina University considered selling covers from its collections but ruled it out to protect its relationship with its donors. Dale Sauter, "Stamps," e-mail message to author, 19 November 2005.

[86] A reputable philatelic broker or agent is recommended since they know more than archivists about auction venues and market values thus enabling them to realize top prices. Doug Mattox, "Questions asked at SAA," electronic bulletin board, 6 September 1995, available at http://www.units.muohio.edu/mcs/univapps/netapps/listserv/, accessed 19 July 2005.

museum collection.[87] The best course of action is to retain philatelic materials, but if they must be relinquished, proceed with an abundance of caution.

Conclusion

Many archivists overlook the appraisal, preservation, and description of philatelic materials. Failure to recognize the archival value of these materials is an appraisal problem. Better descriptive practices will likely improve the use of collections in which they reside.[88] Recognizing the value of philatelic materials and then describing them adequately requires that archivists think in new ways and learn to use a new language. The effort is worthwhile considering the number of new researchers poised to enter our doors and the significance of what they may discover.

[87] The Southern Historical Collection of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has developed a list of seventeen general rules that govern its strategy for selling philatelic and other similar archival materials. Moltke-Hansen, "Posting to the Bank with All Deliberate Speed."

[88] Philip Eppard, "Philatelic materials article," e-mail message to author, 26 January 2006.

Genealogists as a "Community of Records"

Elizabeth Yakel and Deborah A. Torres

Abstract

Owning Memory: How a Caribbean Community Lost Its Archives and Found Its History[1] presents the concept of a "community of records" as it applies to native Virgin Islanders. A "community of records" refers both to how records are (re-)created or reused within a community as well as its contextualization of records (through memory and narrative construction). This paper examines whether this intellectual construct and lens can be applied to other social groups and their relationships to records. Specifically, this article explores the connections between genealogists and records—how genealogists reuse, combine, interpret, and disseminate records to create a coherent narrative of their families' lives that gives added meaning to their own lives.

> So I try to . . . think of all the records that exist that you might be able to find and then try to get them all. (Genealogist 16, lines 516–18)[2]

Why Genealogists?

Although archivists and librarians in the United States often associate the rise of genealogy with the broadcast of the *Roots* miniseries in 1977, interest and research into genealogy has been traced back to the Middle Ages.[3] Genealogists were selected as the subject of this research for several reasons. First, genealogy is one of the few examples of information seeking in everyday life that requires intensive and extensive use of libraries and archives. Their ties to records are not dispassionate; genealogists are

[1] Jeannette Bastian, *Owning Memory: How a Caribbean Community Lost Its Archives and Found Its History* (Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2003).

[2] Identifying information has been removed from the quotations. Also, elisions have been inserted where the normal speech patterns, such as repeated words and phrases, got in the way of meaning. We did this to improve the readability of quotations and to help readers focus on the interviewees' points. We have made every effort not to take the quotations out of context or to change the meaning through the elisions.

[3] Daniel Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past: English Historical Culture 1500–1730* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 73–98.

emotional and their emotions inspire and propel research. Second, genealogy is a broad-based phenomenon. The Pew Internet and American Life Project found that use of the Internet for hobbies has grown exponentially, and 24 percent of respondents went on-line to research family history or genealogy.[4] When related activities such as membership in genealogical societies, family reunions, and research in libraries and archives are taken into account, the number of people engaged in genealogical activities is even greater.[5] Third, although genealogists and family historians do interact with librarians and archivists, they have also developed their own social systems and networks to support their needs to seek, analyze, and manage information. These information practices have in turn influenced social systems and networks. Finally, their work includes both collecting and managing information in the present as well as strategizing ways to pass on the legacy to future generations.

Genealogists are an understudied group within the archival and library communities, although genealogy has been the focus of research in other fields, such as sociology. Sociologists examine genealogy as a cultural phenomenon, focusing on motivations for this activity and its underlying meaning to individuals or social groups.[6] The archival and LIS literatures largely conceptualize genealogical research from a managerial perspective.[7] One article by Wendy Duff and Catherine A. Johnson and another by Elizabeth Yakel articulate a different perspective, unique because they view the archives from the genealogists' perspective. Duff and Johnson found that genealogists' information-seeking patterns were as likely to work around existing archival systems as to use them and that genealogists' search processes relied more heavily on their own social networks than on professional archivists.[8] Yakel seeks to bridge the gap between the archival and the sociological approaches and examines how genealogists' information searches link as much to seeking meaning as to finding

[4] M. Madden, *America's Online Pursuits: The Changing Picture of Who's Online and What They Do* (Pew Internet and American Life Project, 2003), available at http://www.pewinternet.org/reports/toc.asp?Report=106, accessed 12 February 2004.

[5] Maritz Research, *Sixty Percent of Americans Intrigued by Their Family Roots,* available at http://www.maritzresearch.com/release.asp?rc=195&p=2&T=P, accessed 12 February 2004.

[6] See L. Bear, "Public Genealogies: Documents, Bodies and Nations in Anglo-Indian Railway Family Histories," *Contributions of Indian Sociology* (new series) 35, no. 3 (2001): 355–88 and R. D. Lambert, "Reclaiming the Past: Narrative, Rhetoric and the 'Convict Stain'," *Journal of Sociology* 38, no. 2 (2002): 111–27.

[7] For example, see R. J. Ashton, "A Commitment to Excellence in Genealogy: How the Public Library Became the Only Tourist Attraction in Fort Wayne, Indiana," *Library Trends* 32, no. 1 (1983): 89–96; R. Boyns, "Archivists and Family Historians: Local Authority Record Repositories and the Family History User Group," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 20, no. 1 (1999): 61–73; and Roy Turnbaugh, "The Impact of Genealogical Users on State Archives Programs," *Library Trends* 32, no. 1 (1983): 39–49.

[8] Wendy M. Duff and Catherine A. Johnson, "Where Is the List with All the Names? Information-seeking Behavior of Genealogists," *American Archivist* 66, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 79–95.

facts.[9] None of these disciplines explores the essential nature of genealogical activity: the search for records and how genealogists construct meaning through their interactions with the records, their families, and other genealogists. This article examines these critical intersections using the conceptual framework of the "community of records."

The following research questions guided this investigation:

- What are the salient characteristics of "communities of records"?
- How might these apply to different types of communities, i.e., ethnic, geographic, national, social?
- Does this idea of a community of records apply on a more personal level of family identity or identification within a smaller social group?

Methods

This article is based on a series of twenty-nine interviews with and observations of genealogists. We conducted the interviews in the summer of 2003, engaging subjects in hour-long, semistructured conversations focusing on their family history activities. We made observations in conjunction with the interviews as well as at genealogical society meetings during the 2003–2004 academic year.

We recruited interviewees through a variety of methods, including verbal invitations at genealogical society meetings and flyers posted at genealogical resource centers and senior citizen facilities. Our goal was to recruit individuals ranging in age, expertise in genealogical research, and family background. We also attempted to interview people who had different relationships to the multiple social networks of genealogists. In the end, we interviewed twenty-nine individuals. The average age of participants was sixty-two, although their ages ranged from thirty-one to eighty-five. There were eleven men and eighteen women. On average, interviewees had been engaged in genealogical research for eighteen years. One genealogist had been working on family history projects for thirty-three years; one for less than a year. Individuals were all of European descent and white, and all resided in southeastern Michigan. About half had done genealogical research in both the United States and Europe. In the end, two of our recruiting goals were satisfied: the participants represented variety in age and expertise. Their ethnic, racial, and geographic homogeneity, however, has implications for generalizing the results to other groups. A study of genealogy focusing on a sample of nonwhite, non-Christian, indigenous peoples, adoptees, or descendants of slaves would undoubtedly result in different perspectives and motivations.

[9] Elizabeth Yakel, "Seeking Information, Seeking Connections, Seeking Meaning: Genealogists and Family Historians," *Information Research* 10, no. 1 (October 2004), available at http://informationr.net/ir/10-1/paper205.html, accessed 28 July 2005.

We asked participants about their motivations and any triggers for initiating genealogical research, how they learned to do genealogical research, and the methods they utilized to interpret, analyze, and organize their research and family records and artifacts. Our questions also probed their information-seeking activities, including searching the Internet, working in libraries and archives, visiting historic sites related to family history, and networking with other genealogists. Methods of managing family history information were also explored in depth and included questions about very practical aspects of information management such as computer applications used, methods of organizing information, and filing practices. Finally, the interviews probed for data on information sharing, providing assistance to others, how documents were divided or passed along in families, and the creation of family history Web sites or books. (For a guide to the interview questions, see appendix A.)

Two types of observations were included in the study. When possible, we conducted interviews in the participant's home. We were able to visit homes and view information-management practices firsthand in 50 percent of the interviews. In the remaining cases, most participants brought along artifacts to the interview, including genealogical charts, scrapbooks, and other types of research data or family heirlooms. We also observed ten meetings of three genealogical societies over the course of the 2003–2004 academic year, which provided further data on information use, sharing, and knowledge of records within the community. During analysis we were able to triangulate these observations with interview data.

The interviews were audiotaped, transcribed professionally, and entered into a qualitative data analysis application, Atlas.ti, for coding and analysis.[10] For the analysis, we developed a coding system using several mechanisms. Initial coding categories followed the major sections of the interview guide, including codes for when people began to pursue genealogy, how they learned to do genealogical research, interactions with others, and methods for organizing research and family data. Codes emerged then from the interviews themselves, often at a higher conceptual level than the initial codes. For example, interviewees often illustrated answers with stories. Thus, codes emerged for triggering and precursor events, and in turn this analysis led to different categories of these events. From these narratives, we realized a personal introduction to genealogy was an important variable for genealogists—whether someone introduced them to genealogy and whether they had thought about identifying another family member to take on the family history mantle. Thus, *passing information on* was

[10] Christine A. Barry, "Choosing Qualitative Data Analysis Software: Atlas/ti and Nudist Compared," *Sociological Research Online* 3, no. 3 (1998), available at http://www.socresonline.org.uk/3/3/4.html, accessed 28 July 2005.

coded. Codes also emerged concerning how participants viewed family history at different points during their pursuit, which led to analysis of the meaning and importance of genealogical work, and by extension, work with records in the lives of the participants.

Findings: Building on the Characteristics of a Community of Records

> She inherited a knowledge of the world that had depth and rootedness to it. It was a particular and local knowledge, largely useless anyplace else. When she moved out into the fields, roads, and lanes, she already had a head full of stories, which she gradually associated with the places to which she traveled. . . . It is these stories that the old copybooks preserve. The stories tell of things that the eye could not always see. In a land so poor, there was a conviction that riches lay not on the land but beneath it.[11]

Communities of records are rooted not just in physical localities but in social groupings and networks that share culture or experiences, that is, social memory. Bastian argues that a "community of records" refers to the individual and corporate entities that act as records creators and as a social group with shared values that contextualizes and uses these records.

> Through the relationship between actions and records, communities are defined. The actions of communities, expressed in a wide variety of prescribed ways, both written and oral, create a mirror in which records and actions reflect one another in documenting the activities and forming the memory of the community. At the same time, a community of records is also one in which traditions of recordkeeping are developed, manifested, and bounded by recognized and accepted conventions in the drafting of particular types of documents.[12]

This description of a community of records identifies several conceptual areas from which salient characteristics can be drawn, such as participation in activities surrounding access to records, the interactions among community members over records and the creation of a memory frame or shared meaning, shared traditions of recordkeeping, the interface between the oral and the written, and, finally, the interplay among records, meaning, and truth. This article next examines these concepts and discusses how they apply to genealogists and the genealogical community.

[11] Richard White, *Remembering Ahanagran: Storytelling in a Family's Past* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), 55.

[12] Bastian, *Owning Memory*, 5.

Access to records

Access to records, or the lack thereof, is the pivotal issue for genealogists. They have lobbied successfully to increase physical access to records, and they also work to increase intellectual access through mentoring and educational programs.[13] For example, genealogists in Minnesota assisted in the transcription of death records and in creating an on-line index.[14] In the wake of increased restrictions on vital records, genealogists have actively lobbied to keep them open in several states.[15] The genealogists' ability to organize as a group and mobilize effectively around issues provides evidence both of their common goals and that this group can indeed be called a community.

Genealogists also regularly assist others in locating records, both on a one-to-one basis and as a group. All of our interviewees have provided assistance to fellow genealogists in locating or interpreting records. Much of this assistance was also instructional. The more experienced genealogists helped others by teaching them to interpret records, instructing them in search strategies and processes, and passing on other forms of both explicit and tacit knowledge such as the value of different types of records for particular queries. Reflecting on both receiving and giving assistance, one interviewee remarked:

> But it sort of depended on the kindness of the stranger, but it worked. In a couple of cases it worked really, really well. So the answer is yes. I've done a little bit of that. (Genealogist 24, lines 512–14)

Genealogical societies sponsor a variety of educational events, such as lectures at genealogical society meetings and field trips to state archives or to such centers as the Genealogical Society of Utah in Salt Lake City and libraries with local genealogical resources. An underlying ethos in the genealogical community—giving back—reinforces these types of activities. Ten of the genealogists interviewed specifically mentioned some type of volunteer activity in which they engaged, such as transcribing, posting information, managing a Web site, presenting educational sessions at genealogical society meetings, and working in a local genealogical library. Additionally, many genealogical associations offer research for a fee. Genealogists from afar can write to a local society whose research committee will perform research locally for their geographically

[13] Aprille Cooke McKay, "Genealogists and Records: Preservation, Advocacy, and Politics," *Archival Issues* 27, no. 1 (2002): 23–33.

[14] Minnesota Historical Society, Death Index FAQ, http://people.mnhs.org/dci/faq.cfm?CFID=7997&CFTOKEN=33281196, accessed 23 January 2007.

[15] Leslie Meitzler, "West Virginia Vital Records Access Restrictions Bill Does Not Pass," *Sunday Gazette-Mail*, 4 April 2004 (Charleston, West Virginia), available on the Genealogy Blog, http://genealogyblog.com/?p=1642, accessed 23 January 2007.

distant colleagues. These efforts can be quite professional and organized and provide additional access to records.[16]

Yet, these more visible activities have also increased access to records in the genealogical community in more subtle ways, such as by raising genealogists' expectations that records will be open. Increasing knowledge of records as well as literacy about archival materials within the community leads to greater access. Indirectly, as the group's expertise in conducting genealogical research grows, more potentially useful information is identified and publicized, thus benefiting the entire community.

Interactions among community members over records and information

> It's more than just the charts. . . . It's all of the things to learn about the times and where people lived. (Genealogist 10, lines 583 and 587)

Daniel Woolf divides memory into three types: personal, community, and social. Heritage, he claims, is the interaction among these three levels.[17] He also coined the phrase "historical culture" to denote "the perceptual and cognitive web of relations between the past, present, and future."[18] The genealogists in our study exhibited these interactions in two ways. The first concerns the trajectory of their individual searches, which broadened beyond the family as time passed. The second involved social interactions among genealogists, particularly "celebration" and group problem-solving activities, which were significant for genealogists because they involved interactions bridging individual and social worlds.

Genealogists in the study began their quests by searching very narrowly for information about their ancestors in records documenting interactions with the government, such as the census, vital records, land records, naturalization papers, or military discharge orders. As they continued their work, the genealogists' concepts of what constitutes appropriate information changed. As a result, their information-seeking process and interactions with both other genealogists and archivists shifted. By widening their information search, genealogists put themselves and their families into a broader historical frame. As a result, the genealogists looked for diaries, maps, local histories, and manuscript collections that would provide more insight into the historical context of

[16] Nancy Gray, "Tracing Family History," in *Historians at Work: Investigating and Recreating the Past*, ed. David Duffy, Grant Harman, and Keith Swan (Sydney, Australia: Hicks Smith and Sons, 1973).

[17] Daniel Woolf, "Memory and Historical Culture in Early Modern England," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 2 (1991): 283–308.

[18] Woolf, *Social Circulation of the Past*, 9.

their ancestors. Sometimes this search was closely linked to a family event and added specific information to the family narrative:

> It was 1845 when he died. He died and then two of his children: one daughter and one son, died the same year. . . . There must have been an epidemic or something. I'm going to try to go back in history and find out what was going on at the time. Was there cholera or something like that? (Genealogist 13, lines 227–32)

Other genealogists expressed a more diffuse interest in learning about a region; for example, one often attended elderhostels in places her family had lived:

> I only went to ones [elderhostels] in places that I really wanted to go. . .and you learned about the place that you were studying or that you were interested in and you went to see things in the area. . .it gave you a feeling of that place and then you could stay a little extra and go into the courthouse. (Genealogist 11, lines 678–82)

Richard White, an academic turned family historian notes, "There is a certain serendipity to research that no longer surprises me."[19] Accessing different types of records opens up new possibilities for what constitutes relevant information and thus makes genealogical research more serendipitous. These practices align with Bastian's comment that "a community of records may be further imagined as the aggregate of records in all forms generated by multiple layers of actions and interactions between and among the people and institutions within a community."[20] Yet, this transition should also be viewed as a pivotal point for archival or library intervention and assistance, as the genealogist's outward orientation usually entailed more widespread consultation.

Among the interviewees, "celebration" was a community ritual involving an entire genealogical group. At the beginning of many genealogical society meetings we observed, new members introduced themselves and stated the names of the families they were researching. Existing members were then invited to share recent discoveries and "breakthroughs" in a public celebration of findings, which invited praise and acknowledgment.

This "public" acknowledgment of a successful search rarely happens in other kinds of library/archival research, though a quiet one-on-one conversation with the librarian or archivist in a corner of the reading room may occur. Bastian argues that public holidays and commemorations provide opportunities to view collective memory in action. This notion of commemoration can be extended to include genealogists' celebrations. On a day-to-day basis, collective

[19] White, *Remembering Ahanagran*, 255.

[20] Bastian, *Owning Memory*, 5.

memory remains silent and unspoken; during commemorations or genealogical celebrations, the focus on memory provides a forum for things to be articulated.[21]

> The collective memory of the community is framed within the wide definition of the records that it creates, a definition that embraces not only written documentation but also the many forms of remembrance and recording that include oral traditions, public ceremonies, commemorations, artifacts, and markers such as public statues and private grave sites.[22]

Another important ritual we noted at genealogical society meetings was group problem solving. During these sessions, experts within the community acted as a panel and fielded questions from the audience. On one occasion, a man asked how he might identify the location of the ancestral homestead as he had found several properties owned by his family in the vicinity. The panel provided multiple approaches to the problem, each depending on the records available. Members of the audience were also as likely to contribute to the problem solving as to pose questions. In this way, the community provides a support system, distributes expertise in locating and utilizing records, and models search strategies. The phenomenon of asking peers for information is a theme throughout the library and information science and archival information-seeking literature;[23] however, this ritualized group problem solving is not associated with information seeking in other communities.[24]

The results of breakthroughs and group problem solving are sometimes published in genealogical society newsletters and/or posted on the Web sites of individual genealogists. These discoveries are also enshrined in published family histories. These examples illustrate that substantial emotion is attached to breakthroughs and finding information. This personal investment in the search is also apparent in published books that provide moving accounts of genealogical research.[25]

[21] Bastian, *Owning Memory*, 53–54.

[22] Bastian, *Owning Memory*, 6.

[23] See for example, Helen R. Tibbo, "Primarily History in America: How U.S. Historians Search for Primary Materials at the Dawn of the Digital Age," *American Archivist* 66 (Spring/Summer 2003): 9–50; and Ian G. Anderson, "Are You Being Served? Historians and the Search for Primary Sources," *Archivaria* 58 (Fall 2004): 81–129.

[24] Karen E. Fisher, Elizabeth (Betty) Marcoux, Lupine S. Miller, Agueda Sánchez, and Eva Ramirez Cunningham, "Information Behaviour of Migrant Hispanic Farm Workers and Their Families in the Pacific Northwest," *Information Research* 10, no. 1 (2004), available at http://informationr.net/ir/10-1/paper199.html, accessed 23 January 2007.

[25] For example, see Neil Burke, *Pearl's Secret* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); and Edward Ball, *Slaves in the Family* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1998).

Traditions of recordkeeping: creating "houses of memory"

> So we went and found the original documents so that we have all of this, we're piecing this family together. (Genealogist 12, lines 412–13)

Jean-Pierre Wallot, the former Canadian national archivist and chair of the International Advisory Committee of the Memory of the World program, argues that archivists should aspire to "building a living memory for the history of our present," resulting in "houses of memory" to hold "the keys to the collective memory of nations and peoples. . . . The world's citizens can open the doors to personal and societal well-being that comes from experiencing continuity with the past, from a sense of roots, of belonging, of identity."[26] This impetus to record and document so as to build "houses of memory" is widespread, as are "efforts to repatriate archival materials, whether through copying or by actual physical exchange, [which] point to the self-affirming role of records as cultural heritage."[27]

Genealogists go through this process many times over. They search through archives, libraries, courthouses, and other "information places" to uncover, copy, transcribe, and bring home information about their ancestors. Yet, they also inherit and uncover family archives that have been passed down through the generations. This process of re-creation, of building, is key for genealogists. Several interviewees mentioned combining sources to create the family's history:

> And we were fortunate enough with my father's family that . . .my grandmother and her family just saved everything. I have letters from World War II that are very, very rich in family history. I have, you know, just odds and ends that wouldn't mean a thing to anyone else but they're very important to our family. . . . I told you we found a lot of World War II letters. So I typed all of them and had spiral-bound books made at Kinko's and then gave them to my relatives at Christmas. And I'd like to do the same for my family except include photographs, include copies of birth certificates. You know like I have the ship's listing for when one of our ancestors came over. (Genealogist 27, lines 82–86 and 517–22)

With this compilation and amassing of materials comes the need to organize, describe, and store. Compiling records from multiple sources (family and archives) also includes combining oral sources with written records to create a coherent family narrative.

> As far as collecting information, I guess you start picking up family information so early in life that you really don't recognize where. I can remember

[26] Jean-Pierre Wallot, "Building a Living Memory for the History of Our Present: Perspectives on Archival Appraisal," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 2 (1991): 282.

[27] Bastian, *Owning Memory*, 6.

> prior to my teens listening to stories, listening to arguments between my grandparents exactly what happened, when and where. . . . And so as far as physically collecting information, probably I'd have to say twenty-five years ago. (Genealogist 8, lines 4–10)

Genealogists in the survey report reconstituting their own family archives from many other archives by sifting through repositories and taking just what pertains to their own families as well as by creating their own records, such as oral histories. This quest and this recreation (re-creation) further characterize the genealogical network as a community of records. This type of personal re-engineering of the archives mirrors the work of the early state legislatures that appropriated funding for individuals to travel to Europe to copy documents.[28] Just as these states and the federal government sought and kept copies to foster greater state and national identity, individual genealogists re-create the family archives in their (or their family's) image. Bastian picks up on a similar theme identified by Benedict Anderson on the relationship between records and identity, noting:

> Linking memory, heritage, and identity, he argues that documents in the form of newspapers, books, maps, and census records were essential in both forming national identity and the establishment of independent nations in the late eighteenth century by creating shared experiences and ideals among persons who never met but inhabited the same document space and time.[29]

The importance of family records was demonstrated again and again in our interviews, both in terms of the value of the records themselves and in the need to ensure that they were passed down appropriately. Two genealogists used the term "Holy Grail" to describe a family record—one an ancestor's original Civil War discharge papers that had been handed down (Genealogist 8) and the other, a long-sought-after photograph of a paternal grandmother (Genealogist 19). This statement reflects that reverence for family records: "I picked up papers from her niece who said it was a sacred trust to continue" (Genealogist 32, lines 11–12).

Passing along family history information, perhaps more precisely termed "passing on the family legacy," is an implicit part of building houses of memory. Archivists associate continuity and preservation with repositories; families, however, serve this function for their own records. Genealogists, therefore, must identify someone in the next generation who will take on the "sacred trust," necessary both for preserving the family history and for replenishing the genealogical community. This process of identification takes various forms. Some gently

[28] Nicholas Falco, "The Empire State's Search in European Archives," *American Archivist* 32, no. 2 (1969): 109–23.

[29] Bastian, *Owning Memory*, 36.

expose the next generation to family history. Reflecting on a trip to Poland to uncover family roots, one woman rued a lost opportunity, "I abruptly realized when I got there all by myself that I should have brought the kids" (Genealogist 25, lines 85–86). Most genealogists we spoke to, however, waited for some hint of interest:

> Well, my son has a whole story. Basically he's young enough and I'm old enough so that it's not like I could come up with a plan and say okay, now I'm going to implement this plan. It's more like I wait for curiosity and then if he shows curiosity then I'm ready to sort of like come up with a plan that will take advantage of that curiosity. (Genealogist 5, lines 539–43)

Another budding genealogist was encouraged through the gift of some genealogical software:

> I have a nephew, my sister's oldest son, he has shown some interest. He's asked me some questions regarding [genealogy] from time to time, and I actually went so far as to buy him some genealogical software. (Genealogist 21, lines 222–25)

In other instances, though, the younger generation readily took up the mantle. One woman discussed how the genealogical work had been passed down through the women in the family:

> So then of course life happened and I was still interested in it but in preparing for that project in school I did talk to all of my relatives that I could and I tried to write down all the information so that really was the beginning. And then my mother picked it up and when she died in 1983 I "inherited" all of her information. And then for the past ten or fifteen years I've been really, really researching with my oldest daughter. And we go to various libraries; we've been to Salt Lake City to the Mormon Library ten or eleven times. (Genealogist 27, lines 12–19)

Some genealogists felt that family members would not care for or about the family archive, so it became important to create some kind of written product to pass down at least the basic information:

> I've decided I'm not going to get a book written . . . I'm just going to start writing up different things that I have discovered, giving the genealogy, the people, the children, and that kind of thing, and then some of the stories that I found out. I'm just going to type them up, you know, and put them in plastic in a notebook and then if anybody wants it. (Genealogist 9, lines 682–87)

Several other genealogists reported taking over the family history and archives or researching with a parent (Genealogists 1, 3, 10, 11, 24, and 27). Finally, one genealogist appeared ready to assume responsibility for the family archives and anticipated not only receiving the materials, but also projected how he would care for them:

> I have become so heavily involved in this I can't imagine that he [an uncle] would will those materials to anyone but me. There's just no one else of my generation who's remotely interested. . .I sort of just assumed that he would give me the stuff and I would . . . archive it and store it in a much more orderly way than he does. (Genealogist 24, lines 670–75)

Searching, compiling, and organizing records—creating the family archive—are key activities with both intellectual and emotional aspects. Making sense out of the materials is carried on in tandem with carrying the burden of the sacred trust. Yet, genealogists do not build these 'houses of memory' on records alone. Oral history and family stories interact with the records to create the family narrative.

Interface between the oral and the written

> The information that my mom had collected was really rich in stories and anecdotes, and had real substance to it, not just sort of names and dates and so forth. (Genealogist 2, lines 34–36)

Bastian notes that the oral and written traditions have a symbiotic relationship.[30]

> As communities move from orality to literacy, the records produced increasingly become vital building blocks of collective memory through researching and writing history and constructing formal historical narratives.[31]

The genealogists we spoke with also demonstrated interest in this intersection: "So just examining that, the oral history versus what can be documented, that's of interest to me" (Genealogist 21, lines 92–93). The process of creating historical narratives by mixing oral history and records is central for genealogists. One noted that "the secret is to begin early by talking to parents, grandparents, and any other relatives, then to ask questions, hopefully that lead to memories and stories" (Genealogist 11, lines 105–107). Another alluded to the interconnections of oral and written sources in the search process:

> You start with yourself, gather all the information you can in terms of documents about yourself . . . like . . .graduation announcements, birth announcements, just anything. And then go to your parents and then the other thing is to talk to people as soon as you can because you just don't know how long that information is going to be available. And they may not have facts for you but they'll have some really good stories that are fun to pass on. (Genealogist 27, lines 553–58)

[30] Bastian, *Owning Memory*, 10.

[31] Bastian, *Owning Memory*, 36.

In some cases, tension may exist between the records and the stories. In one account, a mother was confronted with the archival research done by her son that contradicts her recollections. She responded: "How much I am finding out about myself."[32] The son, Richard White, concludes that

> In forcing my mother's stories and the memories they represent to confront both other memories and a history that I can recover from places outside living memory, I may be not so much enriching the stories as diluting them and washing the meaning out of them.[33]

This quest for meaning and the levels of meaning and metaphor will be discussed later in this article.

Comparing records to the stories, the genealogists in the survey often found records lacking. "Her records are a little bit dry. I mean births, . . .deaths, and marriages. . . . I love stories. . .They catch me up, the stories do, much more than. . . just the dates and names" (Genealogist 32, lines 288–89, 295, 299–300). The stories can also be hard to resist without explicit evidence contradicting them:

> This [name] family in the Niagara peninsula. . .were. . .Loyalists. . . I was reading the history. . . . I asked [the archivist] at [the archives] if it was a good history and he said yeah, from their point of view. But it deals with [a Loyalist], . . .he doubts . . . the story about . . . [the Loyalist] carrying the message from her house to the British forces . . . walking through the night in a swamp . . . because she had overheard American soldiers making plans. . . .You know it's a nice legend but he doesn't even think it is true. Those things I always watch for. But I haven't run into anything that I know is just downright fiction. (Genealogist 32, lines 358–72)

While all of the genealogists interviewed recognized the importance of records to substantiate facts, they also recognized that the oral history—the family stories—had qualities that the records lacked. Richard White describes the relationship between stories and records well:

> The history that matters most to me now, in understanding my mother's and father's romance, lies neither in the story in the pardon file or in the story my father told me. It is within the space between these stories, the space where somehow one becomes the other. It is this transformation that I want to know, and it is this transformation that I can only guess at and never recover.[34]

Stories enabled the interviewees to connect with their ancestors in a way that records did not. "They flush out the records, the records are. . .terrific,

[32] White, *Remembering Ahanagran*, 156.

[33] White, *Remembering Ahanagran*, 302.

[34] White, *Remembering Ahanagran*, 280.

that's exactly what Uncle Ed said. The stories make them three-dimensional" (Genealogist 25, lines 566–67). The stories also allowed for imagination. "Absolutely, it's the stories that interest me. I'm not expecting to find any hidden treasure or prestige, or anything like that. It's very, very much the stories. I want to flesh these people out and to humanize them somehow" (Genealogist 21, lines 437–46).

In addition to this fluidity between records and oral tradition, the social nature of the information also connects modern and early modern genealogists:

> [H]eraldic and genealogical materials. . .were socially circulating commodities, continuously in a process of revision, not a set of static historical "facts" intended to advance the development of scholarship. What mattered most in the enhancement of genealogical knowledge was not the individual fact or document. . .but rather the availability of multiple sources of information and their free transmission from one interested individual to another.[35]

The narrative process was often a part of the family tradition. One participant reported "my grandmother. . .had written a biography of her life, and when she was eighty, she wrote this. And, so then, we gave my dad a blank book and told him to write his" (Genealogist 20, lines 32–36). She went on to say, "my son gave me a computer, the one who is interested now, he gave me a book, and he said here, you write your story. So, I'm in the process" (Genealogist 20, lines 327–28).[36]

Through stories, the genealogists in the survey ascribed motivation and imbued their ancestors with personalities, even going so far as to rationalize past actions:

> I was telling my sons that my grandfather, . . .when I knew him and probably always, was a sensible type of a person, I mean not frivolous or anything particularly, but he had a. . .tattoo. . .of an anchor and I was thinking about that because he was not the sort of guy that you would think would go out and get a tattoo and I decided that he probably did that when he was a teenager in some port with his buddies and, you know, so you sort of can put some of it together like that. (Genealogist 26, lines 202–10)

These genealogists intertwine stories with documents to create the fabric of their past. They understand the records within the frame of the story and filter the story through the existing records. In the absence of records, the story takes on mythic qualities, as in the case of the family with a purported Native American ancestor.

[35] Woolf, *Social Circulation of the Past,* 121.

[36] Interestingly, a recent book by Stephen Pavuk, *The Story of a Lifetime: A Keepsake of Personal Memoirs,* helps individuals structure the family narrative process (Santa Fe, N.M.: Triangle, 2000).

Yet, most of all, the stories help our genealogists to imagine their ancestors' lives as well as their thoughts and motivations. "I don't know. I just find that genealogy is a really interesting way to find your way almost by chance into worlds and places and times that you never knew existed and never would have picked to think about" (Genealogist 2, lines 534–40). The stories are also compelling, as she reports:

> I mean, the things I like to find the most are where people are fallible and I think we have this idea that our ancestors were all these noble people and I really like to find. . .the things that you find often don't indicate the fallibility of people because that's not the thing that they want to make public when they're writing their one little paragraph about their family in the county history book. I really like to feel that people are similarly fallible through the ages. That's why I like the stories. (Genealogist 2, lines 554–60)

Records, meaning, and truth (seeking truth versus seeking meaning)

> My husband always says I never let the facts get in the way of a good story. But I have been faithful about not making things up when I don't know what's going on. (Genealogist 18, lines 549–51)

> There is nothing my mother has told me that is without some basis in the past. But neither, at least in those cases where I can recover the historical scraps, is there a story that to a historian sifting through the evidence clearly happened the way she remembers.[37]

The genealogists we surveyed revealed a complex relationship with the family narratives they construct and tell. Having the records, in a way, frees them to search for meaning, rather than simply establishing the facts. As a result, they are less concerned about every story being true and can seek identity through more subtle and perhaps metaphorical meaning in the stories.

We found that while our genealogists reveled in the stories, they viewed them almost as allegories. As noted by Bolande Awe, in the absence of written records, oral traditions also constitute archives (or part of the community of records) because they transmit values, ideals, and cultural practices.[38] Yet, genealogists in the survey did not see these stories as necessarily transmitting truth. "Old family stories can be totally warped out from reality but there's got to be in there somewhere a seed of truth that got this whole thing started" (Genealogist 25, lines 342–44). Another genealogist was particularly eloquent about this topic:

[37] White, *Remembering Ahanagran*, 5.

[38] Bolande Awe, "The Concept of Archives in Africa: A Preliminary Survey," *Janus* 1 (1996): 73.

> My mother was full of stories about all kinds of things. And of course I was just taking this with a pinch of salt; I didn't take it very seriously. But a lot of it was funny and intriguing, and she had one particular story that shows that we were related somehow to a very distinguished British civil servant of the early nineteenth century. So whenever I would come across references to him I would follow that up, you see. And later on when I really got more serious about this and really tried to document relationships and so on, I put a lot of time, an enormous amount of time, trying to document a relationship with him and his family, but I've never been able to find it; that's one thing, where my mother, as I would say, was once again wrong. But then in other areas she has turned out to be unexpectedly correct, you see. . . . I might have to modify my view of her, long after her death. . . . In the usual way one finds out the family stories that she told us have a germ of truth at least, but they were not fully accurate. For example, there was a story about my father's grandfather. . .and the legend about him was that he worked in a gunpowder factory and was blown up. . . . And what happened for what it's worth is that he was working in a gunpowder factory, that was the correct part of the story, but he wasn't blown up. He got his arm caught in a machine and had to have it amputated and subsequent to that had a stroke. That is what killed him, so I think that is quite typical. This thing gets modified in the course of time, a different story. (Genealogist 19, lines 31–42; lines 308–15; lines 341–46)

As a result of access to both the narratives and the records, genealogists have the ability to find alternative truths in which they can believe. In one case, a genealogist, when confronted with the record, must face an ancestor's desertion:

> And, I had a great grandfather who was listed as a Civil War vet and I can't find him. I mean I know where he lived and all of this but I can't find. . .his war records. And then my grandfather's foster father, who was supposed to have been in the Mexican War, or so he told my grandfather, my grandfather said, "you're eligible for a pension." So he wrote for him and the letter came back and said he wasn't eligible for a pension, that he was AWOL. . . . But I can't find him. Sometimes these stories are, you know, there are a lot of facts to them and sometimes there's not. (Genealogist 20, lines 102–9)

This is not to say that records can be taken completely at face value. The interviewed genealogists knew of errors in census records, in immigration records written by officials with little understanding of accents or foreign spelling conventions, and in birth dates midwives provided to clerks long after the event. Interrogating the records is part of the work genealogists do, and this becomes part of the space between these stories, the space where somehow one becomes the other:

> Very often. . . the years are different by one or two years and sometimes I make, when I cannot really decide what's. . . the more reliable record, I make

> a note of it but I sometime try to make a decision what is the most reliable record. For example, if you have a death index and tombstone inscription, I would expect that the tombstone inscription, because relatives ordered that tombstone, would be more reliable than the death index where it may have been mistyped. But that's really a judgment call. (Genealogist 31, lines 100–107)

In other cases, our genealogists lived with multiple truths. One reflected on his grandfather's records:

> His death certificate says he was eighty years old when he died and his tombstone says that he was sixty-five. . .and the census says that he should have been about sixty-seven. . . . Now, how old was he when he died? Well, my grandmother always said my grandfather did his death certificate and he was never good with dates. And so with that, there's so much that even if you have written facts it might not be fact at all. (Genealogist 8, lines 459–64)

Even in the presence of records, we saw that genealogists, too, had trouble letting go of family legends. The following passage, concerning the existence of Native American ancestors, has become mythic in one family history. The interviewee returned to this story many times; it was definitely a means by which he identified himself:

> Well, I actually tried and was never able to get any written record but there is enough anecdotal information that there's not really any question and my dad said there wasn't in his mind either. A cousin that he was working for in Toronto told him and that he asked my grandfather and my grandfather never denied it to him. . . . I really investigated this at one time. . .somebody in Fortune told me. . .that the [name] who raised my grandfather. . .they had a sawmill at the head of Big Squaw which is at the head of Fortune Bay. . .and that there was an Indian village right next to that lumber camp and so that, you know, puts them in proximity. (Genealogist 26, lines 406–19)

In this case, stories had the weight of evidence and became underlying family narratives through which all other events were viewed. The weaving of these narratives was part of the process of creating and sustaining self-identity and was necessary for understanding one's place in the community.

Conclusions

Access to records, identifying information in records and transforming it into personal meaning, interactions with others in the genealogical process, and the re-creation of the family archives define genealogists as a community of records. Access for genealogists is more of a search for meaning than for documents. Although genealogists promote increasing physical access through both political

and social mechanisms, the focus of genealogical activities is on gaining understanding through interpreting archival records and family narratives.

Notable in this community is the lack of participation of archivists and librarians although they are enablers of the community. The interviewees did not place them centrally either in educating genealogists about records and the search process, or in the creation and disposition of family archives. If communities are defined by both participants and nonparticipants, this lack of participation is an important consideration for the archival community. Genealogists are supportive of archival activities; they do not, however, rely heavily on archivists for education, either about searching for records or about preserving family records. This is not to say that archivists do not engage with genealogists by lecturing at genealogical society meetings, teaching workshops, and providing one-on-one instruction during reference exchanges. But, archivists were not foremost in our genealogists' minds when they discussed these activities.

By creating mechanisms to foster continuation of their genealogical work and preservation of the family archives, genealogists ensure that records and stories survive for future generations. Their collective memory work is deliberate and proactive. They often transfer not only the family archives and their genealogical search knowledge, but most importantly, the role of family historian. This gift also involves remembering and retelling the stories. Handing over the genealogical mantle has physical (material culture), intellectual, and social aspects that make the continuity of collective memory tangible and meaningful across generations.

Finally, communities of records are characterized by their unique interplays between records, meaning, and truth. As revealed by the genealogists interviewed, self-identification and self-discovery through the role of family historian are important dimensions of the genealogical research process. Family history is more than seeking names and dates through the location of birth, death, and marriage records. While this information is essential to complete the pedigree chart and research family lines, genealogists need to fill in the story between or within those lines. This aspect of the process also begins to address genealogists' underlying need for meaning, not just information. Genealogists are seekers of meaning as much as they are searchers for records. As seekers of meaning, they are less invested in proving the truth of stories and records, but more in uncovering coherent narratives. The records and the stories contain both truth and fiction. In the words of Richard White, the genealogist investigates the space between the records and the goal is to knit these together so "one becomes the other" with some coherence for the person. As such, genealogy is this process of connecting—connecting the past with the present and connecting within the present to family and the genealogical community— and creating a community (or linked communities) of records.

Appendix: Interview Guide

1. Beginning
   a. How long have you been doing family history?
   b. What got you started?
2. Learning how to do genealogy
   a. How did you learn how to do genealogy?
   b. What genealogical "how-to" books do you own or do you rely on heavily?
3. Information seeking and selection
   a. How do you decide where to begin?
   b. What types of information are you looking for?
   c. Do you search for genealogical information on the Web?
   d. What Web-based genealogical sites do you use?
   e. What other Web-based sources of information do you use?
   f. How do you select information or decide which information might be relevant for your family research?
4. Citation practices
   a. When you collect information do you note the source? How?
5. Role of social networks in information seeking
   a. How important are other family historians in assisting you in your research?
   b. How important are other family members in helping your family research project?
   c. Do you belong to a genealogical society?
6. Family documentation
   a. What types of family history documents or information do you keep? (Probe for form and genre of records, e.g., death records)
   b. How long have you been collecting family information?
   c. Where did you get the family documentation?
   d. Are you aware of other family members that have other documents or photographs?
   e. Do you share documents or photographs with other family members?
   f. What are your plans for passing on family materials?
7. Recordkeeping practices
   a. Do you organize your family history materials?
   b. Do you have any type of inventory of your materials?
   c. Would you describe/show the organization to me?
   d. How aware are you of best practices for genealogical recordkeeping?

8. Technology
   a. Do you use a software package to manage your genealogical information?
   b. What version of this software do you have?
   c. How did you select this application?
   d. How would you rate your computer skills?

Primary Sources in K–12 Education: Opportunities for Archives

Julia Hendry

Abstract

Recent developments in the field of K–12 (kindergarten through twelfth grade) education have made archival resources essential tools for many teachers. Inquiry-based learning, document-based questions, and high stakes standardized testing have converged to make primary resources an important teaching tool in elementary and secondary education. Teaching and testing K–12 students require analysis of primary documents, so that archival records take their place alongside the test tube and the textbook in many American classrooms. These trends represent an opportunity for archives to expand their patron base, establish contacts in the community, contribute to the vitality of public education in their communities, and cultivate the next generation of archives' users, donors, and supporters. This paper encourages archivists to consider K–12 students and their teachers when planning programs, digital products, and services.

Literature Review

The archival profession has long sought to understand how and why researchers use archival records. Understanding the use of archival materials can help archivists make appraisal and processing decisions, "make program modifications intended to increase and facilitate use,"[1] and justify archival programs to funders, argued William Maher in a 1986 *Midwestern Archivist* article. Increasingly, the archival literature has concerned itself with the ways in which direct and indirect researchers make use of archival records. The most recent edition of the Society of American Archivists' reference manual, for example, devotes an entire chapter to "identifying uses and users of archives."[2] In the past

[1] William J. Maher, "The Use of User Studies," *Midwestern Archivist* 11, no. 1 (1986): 15.

[2] Mary Jo Pugh, *Providing Reference Services for Archives and Manuscripts.* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005).

twenty years, studies of specific user groups have become more common within the archival literature. Most of these investigations, however, focus on familiar types of archival researchers. A 2003 issue of *American Archivist* dedicated to studying users of archives, for example, included an article about U.S. historians, another about genealogists, and a user study of academic and professional researchers.[3]

The topic of service to young people has come up periodically over the past twenty years in a number of contexts, including the debate over what it means to be a professional archivist. In 1986, Ken Osborne argued in *Archivaria* that, as a profession, archivists had established their roles as experts in historical research, records management, and preservation, but were ignoring an important duty to be educators as well. He called for a renewed role for archivists in the Canadian educational process, particularly in elementary and secondary schools.[4] More recently, Sharon Cook, also writing in *Archivaria,* echoed Osborne's call for more public programming in public archives and for a more systematic program of publishing Canadian history primary sources for use in the K–12 classroom.[5]

In the United States, Marcus Robyns has been outspoken in his assertion that archivists should play a more active role in educating students, particularly in the important skill of critical thinking.[6] While Robyns applauds the trend in archives toward establishing instruction programs for students, he is dismayed that "these programs stress familiarizing students with reading room procedures, archival finding aids, and collections. As if confronted by an invisible barrier, archivists seem unwilling to take a further step and provide instruction and guidance in historical research methods and critical thinking in the analysis of primary sources."[7] For Robyns, the role of the archivist should involve more than simply making archival materials available and extend to teaching students how to evaluate them critically.

Another context for the discussion of K–12 users of archival resources has been in the creation of digital collections and tools. Many archives recognized early that elementary and secondary students and their teachers are a large potential audience for on-line collections of primary sources. In 1998, Anne Gilliland-Swetland was among the first to identify a number of trends, both in educational theory and in technology, leading to increased integration of

[3] *American Archivist* 66 (Spring/Summer 2003).

[4] Ken Osborne, "Archives in the Classroom," *Archivaria* 23 (Winter 1986–87): 16–40.

[5] Sharon Anne Cook, "Connecting Archives and the Classroom," *Archivaria* 44 (Fall 1997): 102–17.

[6] Marcus Robyns, "The Archivist as Educator: Integrating Critical Thinking Skills into Historical Research Methods Instruction," *American Archivist* 64 (Winter 2001): 363–84.

[7] Marcus Robyns, "Reviews—Archives in Education," *American Archivist* 63, no. 1 (2000): 189.

primary sources into the K–12 classroom.[8] In particular, Gilliland-Swetland noted the trend toward student-centered learning and expressed optimism about how multimedia technologies or "computer-enhanced learning" could supplement traditional lessons. Her study of participants at the University of California at Los Angeles' (UCLA) summer Primary Sources Institute in the library's Special Collections Department identified a number of characteristics of useful digitization projects as well as potential barriers to use by K–12 students and teachers.

Particularly helpful is the follow-up study from UCLA, which discusses a pilot project during which students in both science and social studies classrooms undertook an intensive study of an archival collection.[9] This study is particularly useful because it focuses on the perspectives of the teachers—key players in a successful K–12 project. Following Gilliland-Swetland, others have provided instructive advice based on their experiences creating digital libraries of primary sources aimed at K–12 students.[10] Not least among these has been the massive American Memory project at the Library of Congress[11] and the print and on-line efforts of the National Archives and Records Administration.[12]

While the archival literature of the past twenty years provides a handful of articles discussing elementary and secondary students as users or potential users of archives, the education literature from just the past five years yields dozens of books, hundreds of articles, and uncounted Web sites devoted to the topic of incorporating primary sources into classroom instruction. For example, a search of the ERIC education database returned 452 articles with the descriptor "primary sources" published between 2000 and 2005.[13] Clearly, educators are writing about archival records considerably more often than archivists are writing about teaching young people. Why the current interest among educators in archival materials? Ascendant pedagogical theories about the importance of "inquiry-based learning," combined with the content of many standardized tests, makes the use of primary materials *de rigueur* in many elementary and secondary school classrooms.

[8] Anne Gililand-Swetland, "An Explanation of K–12 User Needs for Digital Primary Source Materials," *American Archivist* 61, no. 1 (1998): 136–57.

[9] Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland, Yasmin B. Kafai, and William E. Landis, "Integrating Primary Sources into the Elementary School Classroom: A Case Study of Teachers' Perspectives," *Archivaria* 48 (Fall 1999): 89–116.

[10] See, for example, Tara Zachary Laver, "Off the Shelf and into the Classroom: Working with K–12 Teachers to Integrate Digitized Collections into Classroom Instruction," *Southeastern Librarian* 50, no. 4 (2003): 32–37.

[11] See "The Learning Page," the gateway to the American Memory Project for teachers at http://memory.loc.gov/learn/, accessed 14 March 2006.

[12] The *Teaching with Documents* series from the National Archives, for example, consists of teaching kits on a variety of topics in American history containing reproductions of documents held by NARA as well as lesson plans and student documents. This series also appears regularly in the journal *Social Education.*

[13] Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) database, accessed 24 April 2006.

Inquiry-Based Learning

Teachers are increasingly incorporating archival resources into their lessons because of the trend in education toward using the "raw materials" of scholarship. Across the disciplines, curricular and subject standards are beginning to emphasize the process of learning and evaluating information over mastering the content of a given subject area. In the education literature, this is known as "inquiry-based learning," an approach to teaching that emphasizes the process of discovery on the part of the student, rather than the straightforward transmission of knowledge from teacher to student. Or, as one educational theorist put it, "inquiry is any activity aimed at extracting meaning from experience."[14] This approach is student driven and focuses on asking good questions, rather than finding definitive answers. It encourages students to consider multiple perspectives, and most importantly, to think critically about the subject at hand.

While inquiry-based learning is a relatively recent approach to teaching, educational theorists have long advocated "learning by doing." In the early twentieth century, progressive education reformer John Dewey emphasized the importance of child-centered experiences in his treatise *Experience and Education.*[15] Before Dewey, Francis Parker anticipated innovators of the modern inquiry movement when he suggested that students would learn geography more effectively on field trips, observing and mapping the land around them, than in the classroom.[16] In the 1950s, when American educators sought to improve the state of science education in response to the Soviet launch of *Sputnik,* theorist Jerome Bruner and the National Academy of Sciences called for a science curriculum with an emphasis on discovery, not knowledge.[17] Indeed, the post-*Sputnik* era saw an overhaul of curricula in many subjects. The "New Social Studies" movement of the 1950s and 1960s similarly emphasized the process of discovery and the use of primary sources in the classroom.

By the 1990s, this emphasis on the skills of inquiry and the use of primary materials in addition to knowledge of content had worked its way into almost all national subject standards. These standards, typically issued by the National Council of Teachers in a given subject and based on research in the field, set out best practices and identify skills that students should acquire in the classroom. Ideally, they help guide curriculum development at the local level. For

[14] Richard H. Audet, "Inquiry: A Continuum of Ideas, Issues, and Practices" in *Integrating Inquiry Across the Curriculum,* ed. Richard H. Audet and Linda K. Jordan (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press, 2005), 6.

[15] John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1938).

[16] Francis Parker, *How to Study Geography* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1897).

[17] Alan Canestrari, "Social Studies and Geography: Beyond Rote Memorization," in *Integrating Inquiry,* ed. Audet and Jordan, 22.

example, the curriculum standards for social studies say that by the end of high school, students should be able to "read maps, interpret graphs, detect bias in visual materials, interpret the social and political messages of cartoons, [and] interpret history through artifacts."[18]

Inquiry-based learning has been part of science education in American schools for many years, as the field has long recognized the importance of experimentation. In an inquiry-based science classroom, instead of simply reading about the properties of carbon dioxide or listening to their teacher describe the combustion properties of the gas, students might observe what happens when they insert a lighted candle into a test tube of baking soda and vinegar in the science lab.[19] Although science educators pioneered this approach to education, inquiry-based learning is currently promoted and implemented as an effective teaching method for most subjects and at different stages of K–12 education.

In mathematics, elementary school children do not simply learn formulas to solve problems on paper. In an inquiry-based classroom, students learning to find the common denominator between two sets of fractions compare the sizes of "manipulatives," or blocks representing fractions of the whole, to discover for themselves whether 3/8 is larger or smaller than 1/3.[20] Similarly, a geography teacher might lead the class through an exercise in reading historical maps and photographs and examining real-time satellite images to demonstrate the impact of human civilizations on the natural world.[21] In history, students engaged in inquiry-based learning set aside textbook interpretations of historical events and come to their own conclusions by examining such primary documents as letters, political cartoons, governmental reports, or photographs.

Proponents of the inquiry approach point to a number of advantages. First, it helps students develop mental "schemas" in a given subject, in a way that a more straightforward emphasis on "the facts" does not. As Linda Levstik and Keith Barton point out, research on the differences between experts and novices in a number of fields suggests that it is not merely the amount of knowledge that separates the two levels. Instead, experts have more organized schemas, or "a

[18] National Council for the Social Studies, *Expectations of Excellence: Curriculum Standards for Social Studies* (Washington: National Council for the Social Studies, 1994), 148.

[19] "The Science House," North Carolina State University, at http://www2.ncsu.edu/ncsu/pams/science_house/learn/CountertopChem/exp9.html, accessed 9 March 2005.

[20] Jenny Tsankova and Galina Dobrynia, "Mathematics: Developing Curious Students," in *Integrating Inquiry*, ed. Audet and Jordan, 92.

[21] Martha B. Sharma and Gary S. Elbow, *Using Internet Primary Sources to Teach Critical Thinking Skills in Geography* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2000), 79–80. See also Gerald A. Danzer and Jacqueline Wolf, eds., *Source Maps and the Social Studies: Essays, Lesson Plans, and Materials from Cartographic Traditions in Western Civilization. The University of Illinois at Chicago World History Project, 1993.* (Champaign: University of Illinois, 1994); and James M. Hurley, James D. Proctor, and Robert E. Ford, "Collaborative Inquiry at a Distance: Using the Internet in Geography Education," *Journal of Geography* 98, no. 3 (1999): 128–40.

better understanding of the key concepts in their field and a more developed understanding of when and how to apply those concepts."[22] Learning through discovery, argue proponents, helps students develop these cognitive frameworks.

Second, in a world where the universe of knowledge is so vast, advocates of the inquiry method argue that no individual can master more than a tiny slice of it. Instead, these proponents suggest that equipping students with the skills to discover and analyze information on their own is as important as imparting content information. The Internet, with its vast quantities of unvetted data, has become the first place many people look for answers, so that habits of questioning, evaluating, and assessing information are particularly important for students to acquire as part of their basic education.[23]

Third, the skills learned in an inquiry-based classroom—forming hypotheses, questioning received wisdom, examining raw data, entertaining a variety of perspectives, and drawing conclusions—are scholarly habits. The work of a student in an inquiry-based classroom more closely resembles that of a professional chemist, mathematician, or historian than that of a student in a teacher-centered classroom.

Although the skills acquired through inquiry-based learning would prepare a student well for a career in the academy, advocates of this type of education argue they have broader uses. Students who learn to think critically also bring these skills to the economic and civic marketplace. Critical thinking fosters not only creativity, but also an analytical approach to issues and the consideration of a variety of viewpoints, leading, proponents say, to more reasoned decision making in the workplace and critical evaluation at the ballot box.[24]

Finally, advocates of the inquiry approach argue that, done well, this method can be more engaging and rewarding for students, parents, and teachers. Students become active, rather than passive, participants in their education and theoretically become more enthusiastic about the process.[25] The inquiry approach and the use of primary documents lend themselves to a study of historically marginalized groups, including women, Native Americans, immigrants, and African Americans, since a single textbook can rarely cover these different subjects in depth. As Levstik and Barton argue, it may be easier for students in a culturally diverse classroom to relate to such lessons.[26] Research projects, in

[22] Linda S. Levstik and Keith C. Barton, *Doing History: Investigating with Children in Elementary and Middle Schools* (Manwah, N. J.: Lawrence Erblaum Associates, 2005), 16.

[23] Sharma and Elbow, *Using Internet Primary Sources,* 225.

[24] Sharma and Elbow, *Using Internet Primary Sources,* 3.

[25] Sharma and Elbow, *Using Internet Primary Sources,* 3.

[26] Levstik and Barton, *Doing History,* 15.

particular, can encourage community collaborations and parental participation. Inquiry-based projects can be interesting and stimulating for teachers, giving them new ways to approach standardized curriculum topics.

Archival Records in the Classroom

Since a component of inquiry-based learning involves using the "raw materials" of a given subject, many lessons use primary documents of the type found in archival repositories across the country. Many K–12 users of archival resources are history and social studies teachers. Indeed, the social studies education literature abounds with lessons, ideas, and plans that take advantage of primary documents, usually those that have been digitized and are available on the Web. In a recent issue of *Social Education*, for example, Ruth Sandwell describes a document-based project for high school history students based on an unsolved nineteenth-century murder. As part of this project, students examine a series of primary documents dealing with the murder of William Robinson, an African American settler on colonial Canada's Saltspring Island in 1868, including diaries, letters, trial records, photographs, drawings, and maps. After analyzing the documents, students are asked to "re-evaluate the verdict in the trial of Robinson's killer in the context of the direct evidence presented at the trial, and the more indirect evidence about the community, particularly concerning land ownership and racialized social relations."[27]

Other assignments more closely resemble university-level research projects in which students are given or conceive a research question and are sent out to investigate the issue using primary as well as secondary sources. Many archivists assist students doing this type of research for their National History Day projects—a competition for history students modeled on the science fair.[28] In both these cases, one of the goals of using primary resources is to encourage students to "think historically."[29] That is, students should learn to observe closely the features of documentary evidence, to identify bias within the document, to analyze the primary documents based on knowledge of their context, to speculate about causes and consequences, to make personal connections, and to use evidence to support their speculations.

[27] Ruth Sandwell, " 'Who Killed William Robinson?' Exploring a Nineteenth-century Murder Online," *Social Education* 68, no. 3 (2004): 210–14.

[28] See: http://www.nationalhistoryday.org.

[29] Bill Tally and Laren B. Goldenberg, "Fostering Historical Thinking with Digitized Primary Sources," *Journal of Research on Technology in Education* 38, no. 1 (2005): 1. See also Gerald Danzer and Mark Newman, "Primary Sources in the Teaching of History," in *Bring History Alive! A Sourcebook for Teaching United States History*, ed. K. Ankeney, R. Del Rio, G. Nash, and D. Vigilante (Los Angeles: National Center for History in the Schools, 1997).

These activities are often designed to counteract an impression sometimes given by textbooks that history is a series of established facts instead of "a situated and contingent dialogue among people about how to best interpret fragments of evidence contained in primary documents about the past,"[30] as Ruth Sandwell puts it.

While history teachers may be the most common users of archival documents, inquiry-based learning in several subjects calls for the use of primary documents. The manual *Using Internet Primary Sources to Teach Critical Thinking in Geography*, for example, was written explicitly to help teachers meet the standards in *Geography for Life: National Geography Standards* established by the National Council for Teachers of Geography in 1994.[31] Among the exercises it describes is a unit on epidemics that uses primary resources from the influenza epidemic of 1918 in the United States. In this unit, students are encouraged to use contemporary maps, letters, and newspaper clippings to draw conclusions about the nature, causes, spread, and impact of the epidemic.[32]

As many of these examples suggest, implementing primary sources and inquiry-based education into the classroom is an ambitious task. It requires teachers to set aside the textbook, find appropriate primary sources, and develop a series of projects to guide students through the learning process. Furthermore, such student-centered activities require a disciplined classroom, in which children are able to work independently or in small groups without becoming disruptive. The discipline required for such self-directed learning is a significant challenge for many teachers in "struggling schools," as the more practical proponents of the inquiry method concede.[33]

Document-based Questions

The use of primary sources in the classroom, however, is increasingly mandated by the content of high-stakes standardized testing. Even teachers who do not necessarily believe in the theories of inquiry-based learning are increasingly compelled to introduce primary documents into their teaching to prepare their students for document-based questions (DBQs) on standardized tests. Long a feature of the Advance Placement (AP) exams in history for college-bound high school seniors, DBQs have also been appearing more frequently on standardized state exams, most notably in New York State. Since 2001, DBQs have been

[30] Sandwell, " 'Who Killed William Robinson?' " 211.

[31] Standards at National Council for Geographic Education at http://www.ncge.org/about/membership.cfm, accessed 24 January 2007.

[32] Sharma and Elbow, *Using Internet Primary Sources,* 154

[33] Deanna Kuhn, *Education for Thinking* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005), 18–21.

an important component of the New York State Regents exam taken in tenth and eleventh grades by all New York students. They have also been incorporated into that state's standardized tests in fifth and eighth grades.

On the Regents and Advanced Placement (AP) exams, students are given a series of primary documents that could include letters, government documents, political cartoons, broadsides, maps, photographs, graphs, newspaper accounts, speeches, or excerpts from memoirs. The students are asked to answer a series of short-answer questions and an essay question, in which they are expected to synthesize information from the documents.[34] These questions require students to make comparisons and analogies, use subject knowledge learned throughout the year to evaluate the documents, or take positions on an issue and support their conclusions. To get full marks, students must examine the topic from more than one perspective and "apply skills of historical analysis."[35] DBQs for younger students in New York follow the same principles, but use fewer text-based documents. For example, a second-grade student might be asked to draw information from a photograph, and a middle school student could interpret a historical political cartoon.[36] It appears that other states are following the lead of New York in encouraging the use of documents in the classroom and incorporating them into standardized tests. A typical fourth-grade social studies exam as part of the Illinois State Achievement Test, for example, asks students to analyze charts, graphs, photographs, and political cartoons.[37]

The use of DBQs on classroom and standardized tests is part of a larger movement in education toward what is known as "authentic assessment," an approach to testing that seeks to evaluate students based on tasks that are valued in their own right, such as problem solving, writing, and thinking critically.[38] For example, multiple-choice exams test students' knowledge of certain content areas. However, answering multiple-choice questions is not itself a skill that students will often use outside the classroom. Interpreting a historical political cartoon, however, not only tests a student's knowledge of a particular historical issue, but his or her ability to analyze a portion of the newspaper critically.

[34] S. G. Grant, "When an 'A' Is Not Enough: Analyzing the New York State Global History and Geography Exam," *Education Policy Analysis Archive* 9, no. 39 (2001), available at http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v9n39.html, accessed 13 January 2006; Robert Blackey, "Advanced Placement European History: An Anatomy of the Essay Examination, 1956–2000," *The History Teacher* 35, no. 3 (2002): 311–42.

[35] New York State Education Department, "What Are Document-Based Questions and Why Are We Doing Them?" available at http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/dbq/iione.html, accessed 15 March 2006.

[36] New York State Education Department, "What Are Document-Based Questions," http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/dbq/iione.html.

[37] Illinois State Board of Education, "ISAT Social Science Performance Definitions Grade 4," available at http://www.isbe.state.il.us/assessment/htmls/socscience_isat_perfdef_grade4.htm, accessed 16 March 2006.

[38] Robert L. Linn and Norman E. Gronlund, *Measurement and Assessment in Teaching*, 8th ed. (Upper Saddle River: N. J.: Merrill, 2000), 40.

Many educators have long decried the use of multiple-choice questions on standardized tests in social studies, arguing that this type of test simply assesses a student's grasp of certain subject content and does not evaluate the critical thinking skills that are the real object of social studies education.[39] Further, it gives the impression that history, for example, is a series of "facts" that are either correct, or incorrect, rather than a series of arguments that are more or less convincing. Using authentic assessment techniques like DBQs gives educators the opportunity to evaluate students' grasp of content, but also their ability to interpret and analyze documents, entertain multiple perspectives, and construct a clear argument.

Not everyone is a proponent of DBQs. Opponents argue that they put too much emphasis on reading ability, and students with poor reading skills cannot succeed at DBQs no matter how good their other skills are. Others argue that it is very difficult to grade DBQs consistently—especially in large pools, such as those in statewide standardized tests. Still others do not object to DBQs themselves, but to the way in which they are administered, the choice of documents used, and the ways in which the documents are sometimes edited for content or style.[40]

Legislative Trends

The increasingly high-stakes nature of these standardized tests, however, compels even teachers who criticize this method to incorporate documents into their teaching and to prepare their students to answer this type of test question. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 ties federal funding to performance on test scores and brings pressure on school boards, principals, and individual teachers to "teach to the test" and prepare their students for the types of questions found on standardized tests. In compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act, the State of Massachusetts is implementing a new set of standardized tests called the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System. The tests in history and social science will emphasize the analysis of primary documents. At grades five, seven, and eleven, these tests will include "modules" in which students answer multiple-choice questions and an open-response question, all based on a primary document.[41]

While the No Child Left Behind Act is concerned with testing in general, the American History Achievement Act twice introduced in Congress seeks to

[39] Grant, "When an 'A' Is Not Enough," http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v9n39.html.

[40] Linn and Gronlund, *Measurement and Assessment,* 225–26; Grant, "When 'A' Is Not Enough," http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v9n39.html; Kate Maxwell, interview by Margot Adler, "Writers and activists lead successful campaign to reverse a practice of changing literature in a New York exam to avoid any potentially negative text," *All Things Considered,* National Public Radio, 8 June 2002.

[41] Massachusetts Department of Education, "Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System," available at http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/about1.html, accessed 13 January 2006.

introduce further testing on topics of American history. The act, introduced in July 2004 and again in April 2005, seeks to test eighth- and twelfth-grade American history students across ten states. The goal, said sponsor Lamar Alexander (D-Tenn.) in his speech introducing the bill, is to improve "testing of American history so that we can determine where history is being taught well—and where it is being taught poorly—so that improvements can be made. We also know," he argues, "that when testing is focused on a specific subject, states and school districts are more likely to step up to the challenge and improve performance."[42] Although the bill did not come to a vote, its introduction in Congress suggests that the pressure for teachers and students to perform on standardized tests in history will continue.

Opportunities for Archives

The confluence of these factors—pedagogical theory in support of inquiry-based learning, the use of DBQs on standardized tests, and a political climate that has raised the stakes for these standardized tests—helps to explain why there is so much literature in the field of education on using primary documents in the classroom. Yet, despite a widespread acceptance of the value of using documents in the classroom, it appears that many teachers find this to be a difficult task. Acquiring appropriate primary documents, then designing good lesson plans, is time consuming and difficult for educators who may have no experience using archival materials themselves. One recent study found that even high school social studies teachers who do incorporate primary documents into their teaching typically use "classroom-based" primary sources, meaning those found in "texts, ancillary text materials and primary source packets,"[43] rather than those that they have gathered themselves. While these teachers value the use of primary documents, they do not actively seek out new materials, relying instead on published sources.

Furthermore, it appears from the education literature that although many K–12 teachers appreciate the value of using primary sources in the classroom to ignite the imaginations of their students and to encourage critical thinking, the teachers themselves are not asking very sophisticated questions about the teaching materials they select. For example, most of the "how-to" articles suggest using one or two largely decontextualized historic documents. These educators do not seem to be concerned with considering individual documents in relation to the archival collection as a whole or even considering the archival collection

[42] Lamar Alexander, "American History Achievement Act Introduction," 23 July 2004, available at http://alexander.senate.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Speeches.Detail&Speech_id=22&Month=7&Year=2004, accessed 19 March 2006.

[43] D. Hicks, J. P. Doolittle, and J. Lee, "Social Studies Teachers Use of Classroom Based and Web-Based Historical Primary Sources," *Theory and Research in Social Education* 32, no. 2 (2004): 223.

as the unit of study. This may be, in part, because they are seeking to prepare their students to answer DBQs, which also rely on a small number of documents out of context.

The education literature that stresses the importance of looking for bias in a document tends to focus, simplistically, on the intentions of the document's author. It does not ask other, more "archival" questions such as: Who was the intended audience for this document? Why did someone need to record this information? Why did the author of this document choose to record this information in this manner?

Nor do teachers appear to be asking their students to look deeper into issues of authenticity. For example, they do not ask questions about the provenance of a document or collection. Nor do they wonder if there might be gaps in the custodial history that would call the authenticity of a document into question.

These findings—that many teachers continue to rely on published primary sources for use in the classroom, combined with the fact that few are asking "archival questions" about the documents that they do find—suggest two opportunities for archivists. The first is to work with teachers to find appropriate resources to be used in the K–12 classroom. The second is to incorporate archival expertise into the teaching of primary sources at the elementary and secondary levels.

Incorporating Archival Records into the K–12 Classroom

How can archivists hope to better serve classroom teachers and to help them find appropriate primary materials for their lessons? The first step is undoubtedly to understand the very precise requirements of K–12 teachers. A survey of the education literature reveals that elementary and secondary educators use archival resources very differently from most other researchers and have needs that are not intuitive to archivists used to working with scholars. For example, teachers place great importance on the ability to integrate primary materials into the state curriculum. In a recent article aimed at practicing teachers, Daniel Rulli, for example, suggests that documents that lend themselves to discussions of U.S. constitutional provisions or important historical trends or processes are particularly useful,[44] in addition to materials that document the subject area covered by the state curriculum.

Similarly, the education literature emphasizes the practical need teachers have to find documents that will capture the imagination of their students. The literature reveals some suggestions, including documents from the local community, historical records that document children's lives, items that are visually

[44] Daniel F. Rulli, "Big and Famous Is Not Always Best: Guidelines for Selecting Teachable Documents," *Social Education* 67, no. 7 (2003): 378–81.

arresting, and materials with exemplary value such as ticket stubs and shopping lists. Others emphasize that to accommodate children's attention spans and reading levels, documents must not be too long or illegible, or use too much unfamiliar terminology. Clearly, this user group has different, more particular needs than the researchers whom many archivists are used to assisting. When was the last time an academic historian, for example, inquired at the reference desk for a document that was legible, colorful, not too long, easy to read, and brought to mind a provision of the U.S. Constitution?

Copyright is another important issue for teachers, for they typically copy, distribute, post on-line, and even modify documents for various reading levels. Materials in the public domain or to which the archival repository clearly owns the rights are the best candidates for use in K–12 classrooms so that teachers do not run afoul of the law.

Archivists hoping to create programs or digital products aimed at elementary and secondary schools would be well advised to supplement the general guidelines found in the education and archival literature with a survey of local needs. Many school districts post very detailed curriculum information on their Web sites. Local organizations of school teachers may also be persuaded to offer suggestions or feedback about proposed archival programs.

Archivists hoping to reach out to K–12 teachers should also understand how those who do use primary documents in their classes find these materials. The practical education literature offers some insight, suggesting that very few teachers actually visit archival repositories in search of primary documents. Instead, teachers are encouraged to search their own attics for materials, or to find documents on-line.[45] (Of course, many of the primary documents found on the Internet have been put there by archival repositories.) There are, no doubt, a number of reasons for this. Certainly, finding primary documents on-line is less time consuming and perhaps less daunting than visiting an archives. Furthermore, teachers who likely have little experience doing primary research themselves may not know about the holdings of local archival repositories.

That many teachers turn to the Web for primary documents to use in their classrooms suggests that archival repositories hoping to reach out to precollegiate educators would do well to create on-line collections aimed directly at K–12 teachers and students. Of course, this is not a revolutionary idea—many archival repositories have already done this. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), for example, has long supported the use of primary documents in the classroom. NARA's program of documentary publishing includes volumes aimed at K–12 students, and the agency runs a training program for teachers. The NARA Web site for students and teachers contains an

[45] Susan Owens, "From Attics to Graveyards: How to Locate Primary Documents for Your Classroom," *Social Education* 67, no. 7 (2003): 386–89; James A. Percoco, "Primarily, It's Serendipity," *Social Education* 67, no. 7 (2003): 401–5.

impressive number of digitized documents along with lesson plans covering topics from the revolutionary period to the present.

The Library of Congress's American Memory Web site is similarly aimed at educators, and it also provides tools such as lesson plans and activities to facilitate the use of digitized primary materials in the classroom. However, as Matthew Lyons has pointed out, neither of these sites is perfect. In his 2002 article, Lyons criticized the NARA Web site, in particular, for its traditional approach to interpreting American history with emphases on military and political history.[46] Furthermore, with a projected 55 million school-aged children in the United States for the 2006-2007 school year, there is clearly room for more than a handful of large repositories providing on-line primary resources for K–12 education.[47]

By seizing this opportunity to share their resources with K–12 students and educators, archivists have a chance to make a real impact on classroom instruction. For example, many archival repositories house information about their local community, uniquely documenting local history and culture. Readily available local history documents allow educators to teach the state and local history topics that are important parts of the curriculum in most states. Items of local interest also have the potential to capture students' interest in a way that stories of far-away events do not. Finding documents that are intriguing to their students is clearly a priority for teachers. Children might be particularly interested in looking at historical photos of their own community, for example, to discover how the built environment has changed.

Integrating Archives into K–12 Education

The second opportunity for archives, beyond simply making resources available in person or on-line, is for professional archivists to lend their expertise to the teaching of primary resources. As the classroom implementation of the Digital Portfolio Archives Project at UCLA described by Gilliland-Swetland, Kafai, and Landis illustrates, archivists have much to offer in designing a meaningful classroom activity for elementary or secondary school students. In this project, the design team included teachers and archivists. It is notable because the fifth-grade students who took part in this project looked at an entire archival collection (the Donald Ryder Dickey Collection). This collection was chosen not only for its relevance to the curriculum (the history and landscape of Southern California) and its abundance of interesting visual materials, but also because "the research team felt that both the arrangement and description provided

[46] Matthew Lyons, "K–12 Instruction and Digital Access to Archival Materials," *Journal of Archival Organization* 1, no. 1 (2002): 19–34.

[47] U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, available at http://www.census.gov/prod/www/statistical-abstract.html, accessed 28 January 2007.

considerable insight into Dickey's documentation practices and would help the students think about how the work of naturalists had changed over time."[48] The project worked with teachers to delve more deeply into "archival questions" than those projects typically described in the education literature.

For archivists without the resources to conduct as comprehensive a project, several other opportunities remain to become more involved with K–12 education. Many archivists already participate in the National History Day initiative. In Chicago, for instance, the Chicago Metro History Education Center, which administers the history fair in the greater Chicago region, offers workshops on doing primary research for teachers and students. Local archivists teach many of these classes. Many archival repositories, especially in smaller communities, brace for the beginning of history fair season when their reading rooms fill with inquisitive middle and high school students. Archivists wishing to understand how these students use primary sources will find it instructive to serve as judges for local history fair competitions. Witnessing the results of student projects gives a good sense of the types of documents students have found in their research, where they found them, and how they are using them. Understanding this may help archivists to create workshops for teachers focusing on the aspects of archival research that students find particularly difficult.

Archivists in academic settings have a unique opportunity to influence how the next generation of teachers thinks about primary documents. Archivists and special collections librarians on university campuses typically offer classes aimed at graduate students, often in history, to inform students of the repository's holdings and to give advice on doing archival research. Academic archivists should offer similar services to education students and preservice teachers. These classes could teach basic archival principles, introduce future teachers to the types of materials typically found in archives, and offer some strategies for locating them. One of the goals of such a class would be to demonstrate that doing archival research is not as overwhelming as it might seem to the novice. A more ambitious but worthwhile goal is for archivists to teach education majors how to create effective lesson using archival documents. Adam Friedman's 2005 study[49] of high school teachers indicates that those without training in the use of primary documents in the classroom do not tend to use these materials effectively. Teachers need training to learn how to integrate primary documents effectively into the curriculum in a way that is more than illustrative, argues Friedman. Who better to offer such instruction than archivists?

Finally, many working teachers are compelled by both a commitment to lifelong learning and recertification requirements to attend continuing education

[48] Gilliland-Swetland, Kafai, and Landis, "Integrating Primary Sources," 99.

[49] Adam M. Friedman, "World History Teachers' Use of Digital Primary Sources: The Effect of Training," *Theory and Research in Social Education* 34, no. 1 (2006): 138–39.

classes every year. Archival repositories of all types can offer such classes or workshops for teachers who hope to further integrate primary documents into their teaching. The Maryland Historical Society (MdHS) is one archival repository leading in this way. The MdHS offers workshops for teachers on locating primary sources in a variety of curriculum areas. Its staff will also go to individual schools to offer in-service training customized to the needs of the individual school.[50] This type of education can be especially successful if the repository works closely with local school officials, customizes its teaching based on the local curriculum, and offers continuing education credits for working teachers.

Conclusion

The movement toward using archival documents in the K–12 classroom, fueled by trends in educational theory and the current zeal for standardized testing, presents an unprecedented opportunity for the archival community to become involved in elementary and secondary education. Indeed, archivists have much to contribute to document-based education. Not only can archival repositories make appropriate materials available for study by K–12 students, archivists have unparalleled expertise in finding, selecting, and interpreting primary documents.

Increased use of archival repositories by K–12 students would also benefit archival programs in a number of ways. For repositories that rely on statistics to justify their existence to resource allocators, targeting students or teachers in outreach initiatives is a good way to increase use of facilities and research materials. Encouraging the use of its records by students can improve the diversity of a repository's user base and create broader access to the materials in its care. Such outreach activities can also help to create ties to the community and help cultivate the next generation of archival users, donors, and supporters.

Indeed, the increasing use of primary documents by elementary and secondary school students offers archivists an excellent opportunity to educate future decision makers about the riches held within the nation's archives and their importance in understanding its history. As archival topics continue to make it onto the evening news—from the reclassification of public records in the National Archives to the destruction of historical records on the hurricane-ravaged Gulf Coast—it is becoming clearer than ever that many archival matters are significant public policy issues. What better way to ensure that the policy makers and voters of tomorrow are both critical thinkers and sensitive to archival concerns than to introduce them at an early age to the usefulness of archives?

[50] Maryland Historical Society, "Professional Development Workshops for Teachers," available at http://www.mdhs.org/teachers/workshops.html, accessed 25 March 2006.

Theodore Calvin Pease Award

The New Archives for American Labor: From Attic to Digital Shop Floor

Ben Blake

Abstract

This article grounds the development of labor archives in the context of the archival profession. For the first half of the twentieth century, modest efforts to collect labor records were firmly rooted in the historical manuscripts tradition. By the 1960s, the flourishing public archives programs and the emergence of the new social history spurred a boom in labor archives. This boom ended in the 1980s, as unions faced tougher times and many institutions cut their support for archives programs. Today, the survival of labor archives programs depends on archivists forging a closer relationship with the labor movement, especially by establishing records- and knowledge-management partnerships. But first they must prove their worth to the labor movement. This process begins by examining the history, theory, and practice of the discipline.

Ben Blake was awarded the 2006 Theodore Calvin Pease Award for this paper, written for a class with Professor Richard J. Cox of the School of Information Sciences of the University of Pittsburgh. The Pease Award is named for the first editor of the *American Archivist* and is given to the best student paper as judged by the Pease Award Subcommittee. The 2006 selection committee members were Mary Jo Pugh, chair, editor of the *American Archivist,* Pam Hackbart-Dean, senior co-chair of the Committee on Education, and Amara Edwards. The award was presented in Washington, D.C. on 4 August 2006 at the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists.

The Challenge for Labor Archives

"What's past is prologue." As James O' Toole points out, this motto also applies to examining the history of archives and the archives profession.[1] Archivists have a duty to evaluate their past to build a better future, not only for the profession, but for those whom they serve. Labor archivists have a particularly serious responsibility given the significance of the labor movement in shaping the history of America. Today, 16.2 million union members face one of the most difficult periods in the history of the movement.[2] During a recent visit to the Penn State Labor Archives, United Steelworkers of America president Leo Gerard noted, "Twelve steel plants recently filed for bankruptcy resulting in the loss of 42,000 good steel men, and while I am sympathetic to goals of the labor archives program here at Penn State, those men deserve my undivided attention and our union's total financial backing."[3] He challenges us labor archivists to prove our worth to the labor movement in this crisis. The first step in answering that challenge is to examine our own history, theory, and practice to become better at what we do.

Collecting in the Historical Manuscripts Tradition

Richard T. Ely and Academic History

In his 1886 address "To Workingmen" in the preface of *The Labor Movement in America*, Richard T. Ely, the first academic historian of the labor movement, called on the working masses to work hard, stay sober, follow Christian ideals, study serious literature, and support liberal reforms.[4] In the context of the rise of the Knights of Labor and the eight-hour-day movement, Ely's scholarship marked an awakening of a reform-minded political economist to working-class life beyond the walls of the Johns Hopkins campus. Ely not only wanted to study this new movement, but influence it, so that "The laboring classes are accessible to arguments by those who understand them and really wish them well."[5] He was particularly interested in countering the growing radicalism of the working

[1] James M. O'Toole, *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1990), 27.

[2] Eva E. Jacobs, *Handbook of U.S. Labor Statistics* (Lanham, Md.: Bernan, 2003), 379.

[3] James P. Quigel, "Union Outreach—A Pilgrim's Progress," *Journal of Archival Organization* 1, no. 1 (2002): 64.

[4] Richard T. Ely, *The Labor Movement in America*, 1886, new revised and enlarged ed. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell and Company, 1890), ix–xiii.

[5] Ely, *The Labor Movement*, 309.

class, "[o]ur principle remedy against the evils of socialism, nihilism, and anarchism is better education in political, social and economic science."[6]

In this Progressive-Era pursuit of a "scientific" understanding of the history of the labor movement, Ely was very much in tune with his colleague, Herbert Baxter, also on the faculty of Johns Hopkins. Baxter was leading a new movement to ground historical scholarship in original documentary sources.[7] Given the virtual absence of primary source material on the labor movement, Ely had to rely on his own personal collecting to obtain sources for *The Labor Movement in America.*[8] Ely saw the publication of his groundbreaking work as the first step in the creation of a comprehensive history of the union movement. In this effort, Ely asked his readers to "send me any labor literature, such as constitutions, bylaws, and annual proceedings of organizations, newspapers, pamphlets, etc. The first phases of the labor movement in this country are obscure, and I should be particularly obliged for any of the earlier publications relating to it, as well as for any oral or written communications bearing thereon."[9]

As Ely's accumulation of labor materials expanded, he realized that the task of collecting them had grown beyond the capacity of one person. His solution was to establish the American Bureau of Industrial Research (ABIR), which found a sympathetic home at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in 1904. The mission of this institution was to collect and organize the source material necessary for the publication of a "full and complete history of the American industrial society." In other words, its goal was to continue the task begun by Ely eighteen years earlier at Johns Hopkins.[10]

In the next years, the bureau's newly appointed staff traveled the country searching for documentation of industrial relations in the nation's libraries, union headquarters, and employee association offices. As Ely recounted, "[d]ays and nights of fruitless search have led to nothing but disappointment, though now and again the heart has been gladdened by real 'finds.' Every possible place was ransacked and apparently impossible ones, old book shops and dusty attics."[11] Although this effort focused on published material, the bureau obtained the records of thirteen labor organizations, including the Western Federation of

[6] Ely, *The Labor Movement,* 324.

[7] O'Toole, *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts,* 31.

[8] Reflecting the academic attitudes of the day, a colleague at Johns Hopkins gave Ely this advice on the proper disposition of the labor newspapers in his university office: "Ely, what you need is a good fire to rid you of all this rubbish." John R. Commons, et al., *A Documentary History of American Industrial Society,* vol. I (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1910), 21.

[9] Ely, *The Labor Movement in America,* vi.

[10] David B. Gracy, "A History and Reminiscence: Archives for Labor in the United States," *Archivaria* 4 (Summer 1977): 151–152; Clifford L. Lord and Carl Ubbelohde, *Clio's Servant, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1846–1954* (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1967), 135–37.

[11] Commons, et al., *A Documentary History of American Industrial Society,* 24.

Miners, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, the Chicago Federation of Labor, and the Iron Molders' Union. The related personal papers of a number of union leaders were also transferred to the bureau's growing collection.[12]

These records, including a large volume of transcriptions of original materials unavailable for acquisition, were described in a "chronological catalog of research materials," and arranged for long-term storage to make them accessible to researchers in the future. The work of the bureau marked the creation of the first archival labor collection in American history.[13]

As originally planned, this collecting project laid the basis for the publication of an expansion of Ely's original work. Under the direction of his former student John R. Commons, two encyclopedic sets were published, the eleven-volume *Documentary History of American Industrial Society* (1910–1911) and the four-volume *History of Labor in the United States* (1918–1935).[14] The later publication earned Commons the title of founder of American labor history. Unlike Ely's earlier work, written in a narrative style for a popular audience, these publications were "for the benefit of scholars to whom the collection itself was not accessible."[15] The new works were, in essence, annotated compilations of selected documents that no longer sought to address "the workingmen." Consequently, America's first archival labor collections were preserved strictly for use by scholars for "scientific" research, the raw material for academic history and proposals for social reform by middle-class experts. The records collected by the American Bureau of Industrial Research were largely divorced from their creators in the union movement.[16] For Ely and Commons, the publication of the results of their research nullified any rationale for continued collecting. Emphasis on the importance of publication reflected the traditional historical manuscripts viewpoint, endorsed by many Progressive-Era scholars. Both collectors and scholars saw publication as the best strategy to ensure long-term access to content because the future preservation of original documents was uncertain. In a significant departure from this approach, the bureau also published a general guide, *Collections on Labor and Socialism in the Wisconsin State Historical*

[12] F. Gerald Ham, "Labor Manuscripts in the State Historical Society of Wisconsin," *Labor History* 7 (Fall 1966): 313–15; John Calvin Colson, *Academic Ambitions and Library Development: The American Bureau of Industrial Research and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1904–18*, D. W. Krummel, ed. *Occasional Papers, Graduate School of Library and Information Science* (Champaign: University of Illinois, 1983), 5–37; John R. Commons, *Myself, the Autobiography of John R. Commons* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), 134–37; Harold L. Miller, "The American Bureau of Industrial Research and the Origins of the 'Wisconsin School' of Labor History," *Labor History* 25 (Spring 1984): 174–76.

[13] Unfortunately, Miller does not explain the meaning of a "chronological catalog" involving more than one collection. He also provides no clear description of the policies and practices of the ABIR in relation to its selection, arrangement, and description of collections. Miller, "American Bureau of Industrial Research," 174–79.

[14] John R. Commons, et al., *History of Labour in the United States*, vol. 1 (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1918).

[15] From the Preface written by Ely. Commons, et al., *A Documentary History of American Industrial Society*, 29.

[16] Miller, "The American Bureau of Industrial Research," 165–79.

Library (1915), the first general finding aid created for an archival labor collection.[17] The guide declared that the collection was the "most complete supply of material for the history of labor in America which has been collected in any library."[18]

Rand School of Social Sciences

The library of the Rand School of Social Sciences, founded in 1906, could possibly have challenged this claim. The Rand School was dedicated to the education and training of workers for the union and socialist movements, and as a founding member of the board of trustees later recounted, the goal "was to establish a Socialist school . . . with a broad curriculum to include not only the theory of Socialism but a liberal range of general cultural subjects. We expected to recruit the body of students from the ranks of the workers. . . . The courses are given after work hours, and hundreds of workingmen and workingwomen take advantage of them to satisfy their thirst for knowledge and to fit themselves for effective service to their fellows."[19]

As part of its mission, the school established a research library open not only to students and scholars, but also to members of the labor movement. In the first year of the library's existence, it accessioned over a thousand items. Most of this material consisted of the publications of left-wing political parties, unions, and related reform associations, but it also included important original documents, such as the minute books, correspondence, and organizational files of these groups. Consequently, the Rand School library was the most important institution collecting union records from 1910 through the 1940s.[20]

Stagnation Despite the Rise of Industrial Unionism

During this period, the labor movement experienced a decline and then a major revival. Under the influence of World War I patriotism and the open shop movement, American Federation of Labor (AFL) membership collapsed and the Socialist Party virtually disappeared. Later during the depression of the 1930s, the AFL recovered, and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), a major new labor federation, was founded. Even with this revival, historians generally continued to ignore the labor movement as a legitimate field of study. Office staff maintained current union records, and very little material was archived internally

[17] *State Historical Society of Wisconsin Bulletin of Information,*77 (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1915).

[18] Gracy, "A History and Reminiscence," 151–52.

[19] Daniel Bell, *The Tamiment Library* (New York: New York University Libraries, 1969), 10.

[20] Bell, *The Tamiment Library,* 11–15.

or transferred to academic institutions. The only positive development for labor archives was the founding of the National Archives and its acquisition of the Department of Labor records in the late 1930s. Collecting union organizational records is, however, outside the mission of the National Archives, which strictly preserves only government documents. The Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress could possibly have collected union records, but it largely ignored the movement.[21] Consequently, labor history was written by labor journalists, economists, and social scientists, who relied on their direct ties to the movement rather than archival sources or support from academia.[22]

In 1941, the Rand School founded the American Labor Archives and Research Institute (ALARI) to remedy this situation. A bold statement promoting this effort declared that the "Institute has set itself the task of making a complete collection of all material, printed or in manuscript, bearing upon any phase of labor history, from any angle—historical, sociological, political or economic." In another planning document, the institute declared its ultimate aim was to give "an intellectual status to the field of the study of labor." Later, the institute added another ambition to become a national clearinghouse for locating sources on labor history.[23]

These goals essentially echoed the aims of Ely and Commons in establishing the ABIR more than thirty years earlier. In contrast to this past effort, the ALARI rejected the one-time-collection-of-great-documents approach of the historical manuscripts tradition. Instead, it looked to the public archives tradition with its emphasis on creating an ongoing records acquisition program organized systematically. Despite its innovative approach to labor archives and the official backing of the leadership of the AFL and CIO, the ALARI failed to get practical and financial support from the labor movement. Consequently, it was dissolved in 1949, without moving past the initial planning stage.[24]

[21] Even as late as the mid-1950s, the Library of Congress had the papers of only one middle-level labor leader, John P. Frey. Henry J. Browne, "Raiding Labor Records," *American Archivist* 17 (July 1954): 262. Today, its Manuscripts Division lists the records of only three labor organizations, the American Federation of Labor Letterbooks, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and the National Association of Railway Postal Clerks. Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division, "Labor History Sources in the Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress," http://www.loc.gov/rr/mss/laborlc.html, accessed 26 January 2007.

[22] Unfortunately, there is no scholarly account of the Rand School library's archival program, or the general status of labor union records during this critical period. David B. Gracy begins an account of the Rand School with the founding of the American Labor Archives and Research Institute in 1941. Thomas Connors briefly discusses the library's earlier effort, noting the collection of Socialist Party records and the papers of union leaders. Connors also notes that the AFL published a pamphlet by Stuart Chase, "How To Keep Union Records," which may be the first union records management guide produced by the labor movement. In general, Gracy and Connors present the only scholarly articles to examine labor archives in the interwar years. Gracy, "A History and Reminiscence," 152–53; Thomas Connors, "The Labor Archivist and the 'Labor Question': Two Steps Forward, One Step Back," *The Midwestern Archivist* 7, no. 2 (1987): 63.

[23] Gracy, "A History and Reminiscence," 152–53.

[24] Connors, "The Labor Archivist and the 'Labor Question'," 64.

New Initiatives in the 1950s

In the decade that followed the demise of the American Labor Archives project, a number of new initiatives sought to revive labor archives. In 1952, several energetic members of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) sought to reinvigorate the organization's Committee on Labor Union Archives (CLUA), which had apparently achieved little since 1943.[25] A pioneering article, "The Archives of Labor," published in the *American Archivist*, expressed the rationale for the revival of the committee: "[r]ecords relating to the modern labor movement constitute an important source of primary material for a variety of historical and economic studies."[26] Therefore, labor records should garner the same attention from archivists as other important documentary evidence, particularly given the rising interest in business records. Toward that end, Paul Lewinson summarized what was then known about the labor holdings of government and educational institutions and the internal historical records of labor organizations. He proposed that SAA sponsor a national survey of institutions with labor holdings and create a union listing of all American labor collections. Lewinson hoped that this effort would help to bring labor collections to the attention of scholars, encourage archivists to improve description of this material, and influence union leaders to view their records as an "important primary source of documentation worthy of preservation and care."[27]

With SAA support, CLUA mailed out a survey questionnaire to a large number of libraries, universities, labor research centers, schools of business administration, and other institutions. Only sixteen institutions indicated they had labor holdings. The following tabulation is based on CLUA's findings.[28]

[25] Other than a notation of its existence, there is no official documentation of the activities of this committee in the Society of American Archivists Records from 1943 to 1961. The group was also known as the Labor Archives Committee. See appendix 1, Chronology of SAA Units, for the finding aid of Society of American Archivists Records, 1935–[ongoing], UWM Manuscript Collection 172, Archives Department, The Division of Archives and Special Collections, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee.

[26] Paul Lewinson, "The Archives of Labor," *American Archivist* 17 (January 1954): 19.

[27] Lewinson, "The Archives of Labor," 19–20.

[28] Paul Lewison and Morris Rieger, "Labor Union Records in the United States," *American Archivist* 25 (January 1962): 39–40.

SAA Committee on Labor Union Archives Survey Results, 1954–1955

Institution	Number of Labor "Items"[29]
University of California, Berkeley	35
Library of Congress	19
Detroit Public Library	1
Duke University	1
Harvard University	14
Illinois State Historical Library	2
University of Indiana	2
Minnesota Historical Society	11
New York Public Library	27
New York School of Industrial Relations	(no total)[30]
Newberry Library	2
University of North Carolina	8
Ohio State Historical Society	2
University of Virginia	1
Radcliffe Women's Archives	7
State Historical Society of Wisconsin	112
Total for 16 institutions	**244**

For CLUA, the results were disappointing. Many institutions did not respond, and those that did revealed just how few labor records were being preserved.[31] Moreover, the collections described in the returned questionnaires were so diverse that "[n]o listing of items is attempted here because of the great variety of material described."[32] Consequently, the goal of a union list quickly faded into a long-term objective.

Despite the discouraging initial results, the committee pressed on to conduct additional surveys. In 1954, a new questionnaire was sent out to seventy-seven businesses. Unfortunately, only four companies acknowledged they had records relating to industrial relations. As the committee noted, the response from corporate America was "either uninterested or uncommunicative."[33] Undaunted, CLUA turned to surveying the labor holdings of state government archives. Here, the committee met with a much better response, receiving some

[29] Lewinson does not define what type of material is classified as an archival "item." He simply notes that the answers to survey questions described a wide variety of material, apparently reflecting the lack of standard terminology for defining different formats at that time. It appears that Lewinson was seeking information on official union records, but apparently received a much broader response, necessitating this vague terminology. Lewinson and Rieger, "Labor Union Records in the United States," 40.

[30] In contrast to the totals for the other institutions, CLUA did not publish a total number for the labor items listed in the 1956 "Guide to the Records in the Labor-Management Documentation Center" of the New York School of Industrial Relations. No explanation is given by Lewison and Rieger for this omission. Lewinson and Rieger, "Labor Union Records in the United States," 40.

[31] Conspicuously absent from the responses are the Catholic University of America Archives and the Rand School Library holdings.

[32] Lewinson and Rieger, "Labor Union Records in the United States," 39–40.

[33] Lewinson and Rieger, "Labor Union Records in the United States, 41.

form of reply from forty-three states. From the survey results, CLUA concluded that "much early documentation of state labor agencies has evaporated and that more records are being retained in agency custody than are needed for current purposes."[34] Overall, state labor records were "somewhat spotty and for the most part . . . not yet available to researchers."[35]

The final task of the CLUA project was a survey of records existing at their source: the labor unions. In this effort, the committee lobbied the national leadership of the movement for its official endorsement of a survey, but this proved to be a difficult task for a number of reasons. The union movement was in the midst of the merger between the AFL and the CIO national federations. At the same time, McCarthyism was at its height, targeting many unions, who were in turn engaged in internal political struggles and jurisdictional raiding. Union ethics also became a major issue; for example, the newly formed AFL-CIO expelled the Teamsters and Bakers unions for corruption. Given external political attacks and internal factionalism, the labor movement's leadership in the early 1950s gave low priority to the preservation of its historic union records. Consequently, CLUA was unable to get the endorsement of the AFL-CIO's leadership for mailing a simple historic records survey form to the federation's affiliated unions.

At this time, a thought-provoking article appeared in the July 1954 issue of the *American Archivist* titled "Raiding Labor Records." Commenting on the legacy of neglect toward labor records within the historical manuscripts tradition, Henry J. Browne, a member of CLUA, noted, "[o]ne may at least surmise that the conservative and antiquarian leanings of some manuscript curators have not made them prize such fairly recent and at least relatively radical records in their paper pillaging." He went on to question the motives of the emerging interest in labor history by professors, who seemed to be mainly concerned that collections would "end up in faraway places with scarcely-known names." Browne rejected this "foster care" approach. For him, the "apparent lack of concern for labor records except as they constitute sources of history can

[34] Paul Lewinson, "State Labor Agencies: Where Are Their Records?" *American Archivist* 19 (January 1956): 46.

[35] Browne, "Raiding Labor Records," 262–64. In his discussion of Browne, Gracy downplays the importance of Browne's advocacy of the creation of internal union organizational archives, versus support for transferring historical labor records to external academic institutions, an approach backed by other archivists and labor historians. At the Catholic University of America, Browne limited his acquisition of labor collections to the personal papers of union officials with strong ties to the church. At the time, he supported the university's acquisition of the CIO records only as a last resort if the AFL-CIO did not create its own archival program; Gracy, "A History and Reminiscence," 155. For a comprehensive and analytical account of the history of this institution's labor collection program, see Joseph M. Turrini, "Catholic Social Action at Work: A Brief History of the Labor Collections at the Catholic University of America," *American Archivist* 68 (Spring/Summer 2005): 130–51.

be a disservice to organized labor and even to the historian." First and foremost, union records should serve the movement's own "pride in the past and business sense in the present." The AFL and the CIO should hire professional archivists or records officers to organize and maintain their own archives. As an activist labor priest and archivist at the Catholic University of America, Browne's perspective stemmed from his concern for the preservation of the CIO's records, given its pending merger with the AFL.[36]

Vaugh Davis Bornet, who issued a manifesto for a "new labor history" in the *Historian,* provided a counterpoint to Browne's argument. Bornet, the director of a welfare research project, was hired by the AFL to evaluate and inventory its historic records in preparation for their microfilming and probable destruction. The AFL wanted to tidy up its records for a move to a new building. Upon finding a massive store of historically important records in the AFL building's basement, Bornet set out to convince historians that these records could be used "to rewrite and revalue the history of American trade unionism—and with it the history of the United States."[37] Key to his strategy was his contention that "[i]ntelligent use of such archives as those of the AFL, the CIO and the Railroad Brotherhoods can only be made in conjunction with a familiarity with great manuscript, pamphlet, and periodical holdings of libraries outside the labor movement." Bornet argued that great history can only be produced in great academic institutions. Thus, union records must be transferred to academic institutions in the name of history.[38]

In the next few years, Bornet's perspective gained momentum. The Tamiment Institute, the successor organization to the Rand School, launched a new effort to lobby the AFL-CIO to support labor archives. In 1958, the institute brought together librarians, archivists, and historians to discuss the identification, acquisition, and preservation of source materials related to labor history. Subsequently, representatives of these various constituencies founded the Ad Hoc Committee for the Preservation of Labor Archives, which immediately launched a new survey of university and public library labor archives. Unlike the earlier effort by CLUA to create a union list of labor records, the Ad Hoc Committee's survey had a broader purpose. It was to be used to convince the AFL-CIO to formally endorse the transfer of union records to academic institutions. After a series of meetings between representatives of the Ad Hoc

[36] Vaugh Davis Bornet, "The New Labor History: A Challenge for American Historians," *Historian* 18 (Autumn 1955): 24.

[37] Bornet, "The New Labor History," 10.

[38] "News and Notes: Preserving Trade Union Archives," *Labor History* 1 (Winter 1960): 98; Gracy, "A History and Reminiscence," 155–56; and Connors, "The Labor Archivist and the 'Labor Question'," 66.

Committee and the AFL-CIO, the leadership backed this approach, rather than promoting internal archives for union records.[39]

In 1959, the AFL-CIO officially endorsed this external approach to labor archives at its annual convention, passing a "Labor Union Archives" resolution that declared, "[o]rganized labor is justly proud of its long fight to improve the living standards of its members and of all American workers. Unfortunately, many of these union efforts have not been accorded their rightful recognition in American history." Therefore, it resolved that the "AFL-CIO recommends that all affiliated unions cooperate fully with responsible institutions such as historical societies, public and special libraries, universities and university libraries, engaged in the promotion of labor history, with the objective of maintaining the aforementioned historical records, encouraging modern practices in their preservation and service, and arranging for their ultimate disposition when no longer current, in suitable institutions of learning." This new policy meant that the AFL-CIO leadership encouraged the transfer of responsibility for the preservation of its historic records to academic institutions. With growing membership, influence and power, the AFL-CIO sought to gain intellectual respectability within academia, which, with few exceptions, had traditionally been hostile to the union movement.[40]

In the succeeding years, a number of institutions took advantage of this new AFL-CIO policy to gradually build major labor archives collections. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, which had begun to revive its labor archives program in the early 1950s, acquired the AFL records with the assistance of Bornet. The traditional historical manuscripts point of view of this new effort is

[39] "Preserving Trade Union Archives," 98–99. Gracy sees this development as a "triumph," in which "[a]rchivists, historians and trade unionists were at last joining hands to foster the work." Gracy, "A History and Reminiscence," 156. At the time of the resolution, the academy largely ignored labor history. As Melvyn Dubofsky notes, even "[i]n the mid- to late 1960s, labor history remained marginal to the guild of history as practiced in the United States and to most departments of history. Journal editors frequently returned to me articles that I had submitted with the comment that they published history, not ideology, and that such categories as capital, capitalism, capitalists or workers, labor, class were unacceptable." Melvyn Dubofsky, *Hard Work: The Making of Labor History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 19. A 1977 survey of public library services for labor unions concluded that "There was a surprising amount of mistrust and lack of understanding of anything connected with unions shown by librarians answering the questionnaire." Kathleen Imhoff and Larry Brandwein, "Labor Collections and Services in Public Libraries Throughout the United States, 1976," *RQ* 17 (Winter 1977): 156. At the time of the resolution, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin was the only state or local historical society with any significant labor collections. It is also interesting to note that the AFL-CIO resolution finally enabled the CLUA to conduct its national survey regarding the disposition of union records. The 1960 results noted that fourteen unions retained an internal historical records collection, while only twelve had deposited these records in public or scholarly institutions. Only the Steelworkers had "undertaken anything that, on the face of the returns, could be called a records management program." By calling for the deposit of historic records in outside institutions, the AFL-CIO leadership discouraged the practice of internal archives, probably inhibiting the early development of union records management programs and the close coordination of union records management and academic labor archives.

[40] Lewinson and Rieger, "Labor Union Records in the United States," 44.

captured in a letter University of Wisconsin economist Edwin Witte wrote to AFL-CIO president George Meany regarding the acquisition of the AFL records: "our collection is truly national and there may be some material which you are discarding that we would like to make a claim for."[41] Within the labor movement, the transfer of the AFL collection gave the society major credibility, allowing it to acquire the records of eleven national unions in the next twenty-five years, including the United Packinghouse Workers, the Teamsters, the Retail Clerks, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, and the United Textile Workers.[42]

An initiative outside of the historical manuscripts tradition took a somewhat different approach, founding a labor archives program not only to serve the history profession, but also the then-growing field of labor-management relations. In the early 1950s, New York senator Irving M. Ives, chair of the Joint Legislative Committee on Industrial and Labor Conditions, became profoundly concerned about the ignorance and misunderstanding on both sides of the labor-management divide. His solution was state funding for the creation of the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations. Based at Cornell University, the school founded a complementary Labor-Management Documentation Center in 1949. The collection policy of this center reflected the curriculum of the school and was based on eight fields of the course offerings: personnel administration, human relations, collective bargaining, labor law, labor economics, labor history, social security, and industrial training. In the following years, the library acquired the records of nine national unions, including the Railroad Brotherhoods, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.[43]

[41] Connors, "The Labor Archivist and the 'Labor Question'," 71, note 28.

[42] For descriptive summaries of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin's labor collections, see Ham, "Labor Manuscripts in the State Historical Society of Wisconsin," 313–42; Harold L. Miller, "Labor Records at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin," *Labor History* 23 (Fall 1982): 546–52; James P. Danky and Harold L. Miller, "Sources for Study of the Labor Movement at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin," *Labor History* 31 (Winter/Spring): 176–84.

[43] Leone W. Eckert provides a useful narrative of the early development of the collection policies at the documentation center, particularly on convincing labor unions to donate records. Eckert does not, however, discuss whether the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, or Cornell's Labor-Management Documentation Center, had ongoing relationships with union organizations to preserve their records during the 1950s. Leone W. Eckert, "The Anatomy of Industrial Records," *American Archivist* 26 (April 1963): 185–90. For descriptive summaries of Cornell's labor collections, see J. G. Miller, "Labor Resources in the Cornell University Library," *Labor History* 1 (Winter 1960): 314–26; Richard Strassberg, "Labor History Resources in the Martin P. Catherwood Library of the New York State School of Labor and Industrial Relations at Cornell University," *Labor History* 23 (Fall 1982): 553–61; Richard Strassberg, "Sources on Labor History in the Martin P. Catherwood Library," *Labor History* 31 (Winter/Spring 1990): 59–66.

Boom in the 1960s: The Public Archives Tradition and the New Social History

Walter P. Reuther Library at Wayne State University

The emergence of what was to become the Walter P. Reuther Library at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, represented a major development for labor archives. From its founding in 1959, this institution, with its unique focus on collecting only the records of labor organizations, maintained a close and ongoing relationship with the union movement. In the words of Philip Mason, the library's founder, the goal was to achieve what no other educational institution had achieved to that time, to create a "systematic program to collect and preserve the historical record of unions in the automobile and other mass production industries." In 1962, the United Auto Workers (UAW) declared the Reuther Library to be the official repository for its "records of historical significance" and called on "each union member and local union" to cooperate with the library's archival program. This agreement set the stage to implement Mason's "systematic" approach, which involved two important innovations within the emerging field of labor archives.[44]

The first innovation was a "vertical collecting policy." Unlike previous efforts that primarily collected the papers of national union leaders and the records of top offices and divisions of labor organizations, the Reuther staff set out to preserve a representative sample of records from all levels of the movement. For the UAW, this strategy included a representative sample of about 150 of the approximately 1,650 UAW local unions.[45] The locals were selected by weighing a complex set of criteria: geographic location, type of industry or worker, employer, place in the union's history, being a home local for a national leader, or center of dissent in the union. The Reuther Library also actively collected records of individual rank-and-file workers. This collecting policy resulted in what Mason called "particularly rich collections of union records."[46] In addition, the library acquired the national records of dissident organizations within various unions. In the early 1960s, no other institution collected this broad scope and variety of labor records.[47]

[44] Philip P. Mason, "Labor History Archives at Wayne State University," *Labor History* 5 (Winter 1964): 68–69.

[45] The Tamiment Library launched a similar systematic program for collecting local union records in the metropolitan New York area in 1984–1985. See Dorothy Swanson, "Labor History Resources at New York University," *Labor History* 31 (Winter/Spring 1990): 54–55.

[46] Mason, "Labor History Archives at Wayne State University," 70.

[47] Philip P. Mason, "Preserving Labor's History," *American Federationist* 71 (January 1964): 22–23; "The Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University," *Labor History* 23 (Fall 1982): 535–37, 540; "The Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs, Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University," *Labor History* 31 (Winter/Spring 1990): 146.

The Reuther Library's second major innovation entailed the integration of its archival program with union records management. Beginning with the UAW, the Reuther staff became advisors to labor organizations regarding the design and implementation of records management programs. Consequently, the acquisition of union material by the library was governed by formal legal agreements, providing for well-organized, regularly scheduled transfers of official records. This complementary records management program was unique among labor archives programs and remains a standard for labor archives today. In addition to the UAW, the Reuther came to provide records management consultation and archival services for nine major national unions, including the Service Employees International Union, the Newspaper Guild, the National Association of Letter Carriers, the American Federation of Teachers, the Air Line Pilots Association, the Association of Flight Attendants, the United Farm Workers, the Industrial Workers of the World, and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.[48]

The continued growth of the union movement and the rise of the civil rights and women's movements in the 1960s and 1970s provided a favorable environment for the growth of new labor archives and the expansion of existing programs, as did the emergence of the new social history dedicated to studying American society from the bottom up. Led by David Brody, Herbert Gutman, and David Montgomery, historians finally established labor history as a respectable field of academic study. This trend brought increased academic support for existing labor archives and led to the creation of at least six new labor archives programs by the end of the 1970s.[49]

End of the Boom—the 1980s

In the 1980s, the end of the postwar industrial expansion, the rise of the Reagan conservatives, and a return of large scale corporate union busting ended the boom in labor archives. In this new climate, eighteen representatives of labor, academia, and government archives met in a Conference on the Records of American Labor in 1980. Sponsored by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, the conference proposed that a national labor archives service system be established at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies in Washington, D.C. This service would provide consultation and advice

[48] Mason, "The Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs," 535; Ron Chepesiuk, "United We Stand: Preserving the History of U.S. Labor," *American Libraries* 33 (January 2002): 61–62.

[49] New labor archives programs or collecting initiatives started at the University of Maryland, Georgia State University, the Ohio Historical Society, Penn State University, Temple University, and the University of Texas. See *Labor History* (Fall 1982).

for the establishment of records management programs for unions throughout the country. In addition, this new national labor archives service would lead a coordinated effort for gathering and disseminating information on the extent and location of labor collections. Both efforts were to be supported through the formation of a new national labor archives consortium.[50]

In the ensuing years, these goals were partially achieved; the Meany Center offered occasional courses on records management and published a basic handbook for union records management.[51] Although a formal labor archives consortium never materialized, labor archivists did found the Labor Archives Roundtable (LAR), which succeeded the Labor Archives Committee within SAA in 1985.[52] The LAR went on to publish a directory of repositories with significant labor holdings in *Labor History* in 1992. The LAR directory complemented the publication of *Labor History Archives in the United States: A Guide for Researching and Teaching,* edited by Daniel J. Leab and Philip P. Mason, which presented detailed descriptions of the major labor holdings of thirty-eight institutions.[53]

One development in the 1980s that cut across the general pattern of modest coordination and publication, coupled with retrenchment, was the founding of the George Meany Memorial Archives on the campus of the George Meany Center for Labor Studies in 1987. This new institution marked a significant break with the 1959 policy of relying on academic institutions for preservation of union records and creation of labor history. Approved at the 1981 AFL-CIO convention and funded through a per capita tax on the membership, the Meany Archives was seen as a complement to the AFL-CIO's National Labor College, an accredited institution granting a degree in union leadership and administration. Unlike the Reuther Library, the Meany Archives has taken a top-down approach, primarily preserving the records of the national leadership and its administrative divisions. It does not accept the records of nationally affiliated unions or AFL-CIO state or local federations. The Meany Archives does, however, integrate its archival program with records management

[50] Connors, "The Labor Archivist and the 'Labor Question'," 67.

[51] Debra Bernhardt, *How to Keep Union Records* (Washington, D.C.: AFL-CIO, n.d.).

[52] Prior to the founding of the LAR, the Labor Archives Committee existed within SAA, 1943–1961, 1969–1973 (as part of the Urban and Industrial Archives Committee), and then again as an independent committee, 1973–1985. Little documentation of the activities of the Labor Archives Committee or the LAR exists within the records of the SAA. It is very interesting to note that the Labor Archives Committee apparently did not exist during most of the 1960s, just as the new labor history was emerging in academia and the labor archives programs in a number of institutions were gaining momentum. Society of American Archivists Records, 1935–[ongoing].

[53] Debra Bernhardt and Brenda Parnes, "Labor Archives Roundtable of the Society of American Archivists: A Directory and Concise Guide to Holdings," *Labor History* 33 (Fall 1992); Daniel J. Leab and Philip P. Mason, *Labor History Archives in the United State: A Guide for Researching and Teaching* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1992).

outreach to the national AFL-CIO organizational structure. In general, it has served as an in-house archives and records management program for national AFL-CIO offices and departments and as a resource for the National Labor College and academic research.[54]

In 1997, five archivists from leading labor repositories created the Labor Archives Project (LAP). This project collected information on the accessioning practices, collecting missions, geographical and topical scopes of holdings, processing performances, relationships to union records management programs, and user habits of eighteen repositories with labor collections. It also surveyed twenty national union offices concerning their organizational structure and records management.[55] Based on the results of these surveys, LAP recommended a number of immediate actions. The most important recommendation called on labor archivists to develop a closer working relationship with the labor movement by encouraging new partnerships between repositories and unions. This new relationship would center on organizing records management training programs for labor records keepers, intervening to save records during organizational mergers, and lobbying the movement to pass constitutional provisions requiring the proper disposition of records. In addition, the project recommended updating and re-issuing the *Labor History* directory of labor archives and the Meany Archives' *How to Keep Union Records* manual, along with establishing a Labor Documentation Action Network.[56]

For the long term, the Labor Archives Project recommended additional actions after the establishment of this network. The first order of business was a systematic analysis of the holdings and gaps in U.S. labor documentation. Next, national, state, and local labor bodies with no archival program should be affiliated with a repository. In addition, the network would explore digital access to labor archives, the preservation of electronic records, and the establishment of a labor archives outreach program.[57]

The continued lack of overall national coordination of labor archives programs beyond the informal efforts of the Labor Archive Roundtable makes it difficult to determine the response to these recommendations. Although a formal Labor Documentation Action Network never materialized, many labor repositories have gone forward with implementing DACS, MARC, and EAD based cataloging programs and Web exhibits. In addition, the original labor

[54] Katharine Vogel, "The George Meany Memorial Archives," *Labor History* 31 (Winter/Spring 1990): 117–23.

[55] Thomas J. Connors, "Preserving the Historical Record of American Labor: Union-Library Archival Services Partnerships, Recent Trends, and Future Prospects," *Library Trends* 51 (Summer 2002): 87, 89–97.

[56] Connors, "Preserving the Historical Record of American Labor," 88.

[57] Connors, "Preserving the Historical Record of American Labor," 89.

archives directory has been updated and posted on the Roundtable's Web site and a new edition of the *How to Keep Union Records* manual will be published in the near future.[58] The reaction from the labor movement to the project's recommendations has been less ambiguous. As one participant noted, the attempt to get the backing of the AFL-CIO leadership for the project was not successful as "a hearing proved difficult to obtain."[59]

Despite the lack of national AFL-CIO support for this initiative, institutional momentum has meant the continued slow growth of labor archives. By 1996, thirty of the seventy-eight national affiliates of the AFL-CIO had in-house archives programs, or agreements for archival services with outside repositories.[60] Eighteen academic institutions or historical societies had major labor holdings containing over 3,200 collections comprising over 125,000 linear feet of records and employing a staff of forty-two labor archivists.[61]

Examining Our History, Theory, and Current Practice

The successful record of the labor archives project, founded over a century ago by Richard Ely, does not mean that we professionals in the field should not critically examine our history, theory, and current practice. To date, most

[58] http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/labor/labor_archives_directory.asp, accessed 24 January 2007.

[59] Connors, "Preserving the Historical Record of American Labor," 89.

[60] Connors notes that the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the American Postal Workers "reported maintaining limited in-house archives programs." "Preserving the Historical Record of American Labor," 90. Mason indicates that the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the National Association of Letter Carriers, and the Communications Workers of America (CWA) also had internal archives in the 1990s. Philip P. Mason, "Labor Archives and Collections in the United States," *Labor History* 31 (Winter/Spring 1990): 11. The 1992 SAA Labor Archives Roundtable directory of labor archives indicated only three national unions with internal archives: the CWA, the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, and the United Paperworkers International Union. Bernhardt and Parnes, "Labor Archives Roundtable of the Society of American Archivists: A Directory and Concise Guide to Holdings." The CWA records were subsequently transferred to Wagner Archives at New York University. The Paperworkers are now part of the United Steelworkers, but have apparently maintained their own archives. The current updated Web version of the SAA Labor Roundtable lists only the last two national union archives. Patrizia Sione, "Directory of Labor Archives in the United States and Canada," http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/labor/labor_archives_directory.asp, accessed 24 January 2007. Note that the George Meany Archives only maintains the records of the national federation and some defunct affiliates, not the records of any current nationally affiliated unions. Vogel, "The George Meany Memorial Archives," 117.

[61] Connors, "Preserving the Historical Record of American Labor," 93. A current estimate of the total number and volume of labor collections is not possible because this information is absent from many of the entries in the SAA Labor Roundtable Web directory. It is also not possible to compile an up-to-date list of officially designated union repositories because this information is missing from many LAR directory entries. It is possible to get a general sense of the overall national disposition of labor-related collections. Of the forty-six U.S. repositories listed in the directory, twenty-seven are university affiliated, eight are state or local historical societies, five are unions (one national federation, two national unions, two local unions), three are museums, and two are national government institutions. Sione, "Directory of Labor Archives in the United States and Canada."

writings describe the labor holdings of various institutions and fall under the category of what O'Toole calls "how we do it good" literature.[62] In over a century of practice, only a handful of scholarly articles examine the history, theory, and practice of American labor archives.

Only two articles give professional overviews of the history of American labor archives: first, "A History and Reminiscence: Archives for Labor in the United States," by David B. Gracy II, and second, "The Labor Archivist and the 'Labor Question': Two Steps Forward, One Step Back," by Thomas Connors.[63] Both articles were written about two decades ago and are primarily descriptive narratives. It is time to update this history and make it more analytical. This new labor archives history should follow the mantra of the new labor history. It should be based on primary sources about archivists' activities and it should critically evaluate the history of the field in light of its unfolding theoretical debates and practical experience. For example, the influence of the historical manuscripts tradition on the early efforts of Ely and Commons is obvious. More difficult to discern is how the interplay between this tradition and the emergence of the public archives perspective influenced the development of labor archives. This paper touches on this issue at certain points, but a serious answer to this question will require in-depth primary research.

Fortunately, Joseph M. Turrini has produced an excellent sample of this research in his "Catholic Social Action at Work: A Brief History of the Labor Collection at The Catholic University of America."[64] Turrini critically examines the history of this labor archives program in light of its evolving collection development practices and acquisition policies in a way that is useful and thought provoking in light of the current problems facing labor archivists. His scholarship should become a model for many future articles on the history of the field.

Unfortunately, only two authors significantly discuss archival theory in the context of labor archives. A decade ago, in the first, "Documenting Labor for a New Generation of Scholars," Margret Raucher explores the impact of the new social history on description and collection policies at the Reuther Library, where the rise of the new labor history produced a shift away from "old-style institutional/occupational/biographical topics" toward "newer themes of race, gender, ethnicity, class and community." As the Reuther staff became

[62] O'Toole, *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts*, 47. Most disappointing are the articles written by Philip P. Mason, which are almost entirely descriptive in nature, providing little theoretical, methodological, or practical insights for the field. See Philip P. Mason, "Labor Archives in the United States: Achievements and Prospects," *Labor History* 23 (1982): 487–97 and "Labor Archives and Collections in the United States," 10–15.

[63] Gracy, "A History and Reminiscence," 151–65. Connors, "The Labor Archivist and the 'Labor Question'," 61–72.

[64] Turrini, "Catholic Social Action at Work," 130–51.

increasingly aware of this trend, the library launched a major project to revise its finding aid descriptions to reflect the demands of this new scholarship.[65] Raucher, however, notes that there is a danger in uncritically accommodating to the influence of the new labor history. In her words, "[b]y accepting the broader definition of the worker posited by this new generation of labor historians, we run the risk of designing a collecting policy so diffuse as to be meaningless, not to mention the ethical dilemma presented by cross-thematic collecting." She concludes, "labor history is no longer just union history, and the story of the American worker cannot be reconstructed exclusively from the records of organized labor. The house of labor is so big and its scholarship so resourceful, though, that we labor archivists need not fear our own irrelevance in the post-industrial age, if we cast our collection net wide enough."[66] Raucher's article reflected the broadening scope of labor archives in 1980s and 1990s, adjusting to meet the demands of the new social and post-modern historians.

In 2005, James P. Quigel authored the second significant article examining archival theory in relation to labor archives, "Reconstructing or Deconstructing Labor Archives? Shaping Labor Collection Development in an Uncertain Future." In it, Quigel discusses a wide variety of factors influencing a documentation strategy for labor at the Historical Collections and Labor Archives (HCLA) at Pennsylvania State University.[67] He describes the increasing subordination of labor archives to the evolving general mission of university archival programs. Quigel observes that many university libraries have "restructured by consolidating and integrating labor archives within the mainstream of special collections activities and initiatives." He goes on to note, "As resources are diverted to new collection development priorities, it becomes harder to acquire significant labor collections that have been the core strength of the HCLA. With many industrial unions in decline, prospects for funding their own labor archival programs are dim. From the standpoint of the libraries' administration, the investment of resources in developing large institutional labor collections and providing reference and outreach service to client unions is simply not a cost-effective proposition. Unions do not fit the profile of the well-heeled corporate donor that the university seeks to cultivate."[68] Quigel's solution is to redouble efforts to strengthen ties to the labor movement through records management and outreach programs. At the same time, collection and appraisal policies should

[65] Margaret Raucher, "Documenting Labor for a New Generation of Scholars," *Labor History* 38 (Winter 1996–1997): 67–75.

[66] Raucher, "Documenting Labor for a New Generation," 75.

[67] James P. Quigel, Jr., "Reconstructing or Deconstructing Labor Archives? Shaping Labor Collection Development in an Uncertain Future," *Journal of Archival Organization* 3 (Fall 2005): 25–47.

[68] Quigel, "Reconstructing or Deconstructing," 34–35.

be more refined to match the continued importance of class, race, gender, ethnicity, and community within history.

Only one major article addresses the day-to-day practice of labor archives, and it was published in 1979. In "Labor Union Grievance Records: An Appraisal Strategy," Richard Kesner discusses an attempt to create a sampling strategy for handling the grievance records contained in the UAW collections at the Reuther Library.[69] First, he frames the project's strategy within the professional literature on appraisal and sampling. He then provides a very detailed and informative narrative of the project. Kesner concludes that sampling is not appropriate for grievance records due to their complexity and variety. A practical solution to the typically large volume of this type of union material lies in a better definition of vertical collection policies in relation to these records. In other words, controlling the volume of grievance records should be done through a better selection of the local unions targeted by the collection program. In this way, the volume of records can be controlled while a representative horizontal sample can be preserved in the archives. Thus, there is a systemic, rather than a sampling, solution to this problem.[70] Kesner's discussion of appraisal and sampling provides a good starting point for updating a strategy for handling the exploding volume of modern labor records.

Conclusion

This review of American labor archives is done in the spirit of promoting a framework for future research. Labor archivists have achieved great practical success, but lack a proportionate validation of their history, theory, and practice in the professional literature. Labor archivists could be of particular service to the archival profession as a whole by presenting their experience with vertical sampling schemes, the integration of records management and archives, and the impact of the new social and postmodern history on describing institutional collections. In the end, all archivists face similar problems. By discussing solutions to these problems in historical and theoretical contexts, labor archivists can better share their thoughts with the entire archival community.

More importantly, an expanded professional dialogue could help labor archivists address a wide variety of new issues posed by the digital age. Should the idea of a national documentation strategy be revived to use the increasingly scarce resources available to labor archives effectively? Is knowledge management an approach that has relevance to labor archives? How can a union's

[69] Richard Kesner, "Labor Union Grievance Records: An Appraisal Strategy," *Archivaria* 8 (Summer 1979): 102–14.

[70] Quigel advocates the same solution. Quigel, "Reconstructing or Deconstructing," 38.

electronic records management systems be integrated with a labor archives program? What new services can be developed to make historic union records accessible and useful to union leaders, organizers, and members engaged in contract negotiations, legal proceedings, arbitration cases, and grievance resolution? How can Web sites be developed to bring the rich history of labor to the digital shop floor? And conversely, how can union members be engaged in documenting their own history through the development of blogs and wiki technologies? By exploring new ideas, implementing new digital strategies, and sharing this experience, labor archives can regain their position on the leading edge of the profession and better serve all their constituencies.

Case Study

Assessing Preservation Needs of Manuscript Collections with a Comprehensive Survey

Cheryl Gunselman

Abstract

This article describes the planning, funding, methodology, and impact of a comprehensive survey of the physical condition and preservation needs of manuscript collections in the Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections (MASC) unit of the Washington State University Libraries. MASC librarians and management determined that these collections, as well as MASC's historical photograph collections, should be systematically surveyed and assessed, so that a prioritized preservation treatment plan could be developed. MASC librarians designed and executed two separate surveys, one for photograph collections and one for manuscripts. The manuscript portion of the survey project, which supported the development of a comprehensive preservation treatment plan for processed manuscript collections, is the subject of this article.

Introduction

The Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections (MASC) unit of the Washington State University (WSU) Libraries is responsible for acquiring, processing, preserving, and providing access to manuscripts,

I am grateful for the assistance of my colleague and coprincipal investigator Trevor Bond, Special Collections librarian, and for the support and contributions of Laila Miletic-Vejzovic, head of MASC; Saadia Hassan, graduate assistant; Gudrun Aurand, formerly MASC conservator and now in private practice; and, for financial assistance with the project, the Washington State Library's Washington Preservation Initiative program. I would also like to thank the editor of *American Archivist* and the two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments and suggestions.

graphic materials such as historical photographs and maps, rare books and other printed materials, and the archives of the university. These collections have been acquired by MASC and its predecessors since the founding of the university over a century ago. Manuscript collections include personal papers, records of businesses and organizations, congressional papers, and literary manuscripts. Most of these materials are paper based, but media such as audio recordings, film, and video are also present in some collections. Approximately 5,500 linear feet of processed manuscript material ranging in extent from a single item to several hundred boxes,[1] are housed in a modern, climate-controlled facility located on the WSU Pullman campus. A full-time manuscripts librarian (the author) provides access to these collections and assists the unit head with collection management and development.

Researchers can easily discover information about processed collections using on-line access tools. Approximately 2,250 collections have on-line catalog records, and approximately 500 of these also have on-line finding aids. These finding aids are available through the MASC Web site in HTML format, and many are also included in the Northwest Digital Archives on-line database in Encoded Archival Description format.[2]

Phase I: Survey

Project Background

Preservation activities are a fundamental element of collection processing and management in MASC, but specific preservation practices have varied over time. This variation is easy to observe in the normal course of handling collections, and it is true of both simple preservation treatments, such as rehousing or fastener removal, and of more complex treatments, such as flattening or repair. An in-house conservation laboratory, established in the late 1980s, increased internal capabilities for providing specialized treatment for damaged, unstable, and/or fragile items. A conservator responsible for treating all types of paper-based materials, including books and other printed materials, photographic prints, and manuscripts, staffs the lab. In current practice, fragile or damaged items are routinely sent to the lab for treatment in conjunction with processing. Prior to this survey, no system was in place for similar routine treatment of previously processed photographs and manuscripts, which were treated only as

[1] Approximately 3,000 additional linear feet of unprocessed manuscript collections comprise roughly 600 individual accessions. These materials were not included in these projects.

[2] The Northwest Digital Archives (NWDA) is an on-line union database of Encoded Archival Description finding aids from institutions in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Alaska, and Montana. The NWDA database is available at http://nwda.wsulibs.wsu.edu, accessed 8 August 2006.

researchers or staff members observed condition problems in the course of use. If a staff member believed an item was so fragile or damaged that it needed immediate attention, particularly if it was unsuitable for use, it was sent to the lab for treatments such as cleaning, repair, humidification, flattening, and the addition of custom enclosures. If the need did not seem urgent, the materials were generally returned to the shelves after use. The need for treatment that could be done outside the lab, such as simple rehousing, was sometimes noted by the librarian as a possible future project, but no system existed to incorporate these activities into normal work flow.

In MASC, as in many other repositories, manuscript cases and records cartons neatly arrayed on the shelves sometimes conceal materials in need of preservation treatment. The most common problems with manuscript collections are stress on contents due to over- or underfilled containers; overstuffed folders; the presence of rusty or sharp fasteners; brittle, torn, and/or fragile (usually acidic) paper; surface soil; and folded documents that cannot be safely unfolded for use.

We also lacked data about the preservation needs of historical photograph collections, but based on observations made in the course of handling, they also needed to be assessed.

The unit head and librarians all agreed that the anecdotal evidence showed the need for gathering data about collection condition to support an efficient and effective approach to preservation. We agreed with Tyler Walters, former head of the SAA Preservation Section, who observed that "The result of being an informed manager is being a decisive manager. If the 72 percent of repositories who have not performed holdings condition surveys would do so, they will find that preservation priorities will develop and that indecision and ad hoc preservation activity will begin to subside."[3]

Search for Project Models

Before developing a survey methodology, we searched the professional literature. We hoped to identify case studies that could provide models for such a large-scale collection assessment and also to discover existing survey instruments that we could adapt for our purposes rather than developing one entirely from scratch. We needed to identify a survey model with elements that corresponded well with the kinds of manuscripts held in MASC, one that would enable us to gather meaningful information to serve as the basis for a preservation plan. We also hoped to discover metrics to assist us in anticipating the resources, particularly labor, needed to execute the survey successfully.

[3] Tyler O. Walters, "Special Collections Repositories at Association of Research Libraries Institutions: A Study of Current Practices in Preservation Management," *American Archivist* 61 (Spring 1998): 170.

Our literature review revealed considerable information on the general subject of preservation of special collections, but little dealing specifically with collection surveys for manuscript and photograph collections. The repositories we identified in case studies in late 2003 were not sufficiently similar to MASC to be directly applicable for our survey. The literature indicated that similar surveys were being conducted, but none had been reported or published as case studies.[4] We did not discover any survey metrics to assist us in planning the project. Although the lack of information about other institutions' experiences with such surveys was disappointing, we proceeded with our project planning, recognizing that we would need to rely heavily on our own judgment in balancing tasks to be accomplished with resources available to accomplish them.

Although we did not locate an existing survey instrument to adopt for our project, we found suggestions for a collection or record group survey, including a sample survey form, in *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts* by Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler.[5] And, just as we were developing our draft survey instrument, we discovered another helpful resource: a newly published survey guide from the Northeast Document Conservation Center.[6] We used its recommendations in developing our survey form. Both publications helped us to remember to focus on making "actionable" observations about the condition of collections during the project. As Ritzenthaler notes, "Data gathered on the physical needs of collections must be considered in combination with available resources and the relative values and projected uses of the materials, as the basis for assigning preservation priorities."[7] This concept is important because it increases the utility of the data, providing for easy translation of survey observations into specific recommendations for treatment, taking into account specific institutional resources and capabilities. These recommendations ultimately became the foundation for our comprehensive, prioritized preservation plan for manuscript collections.

[4] Among the works consulted were Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler, *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1993); Graham Matthews, "Surveying Collections: The Importance of Condition Assessment for Preservation Management," *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* 27 (December 1995): 227–36; Paul R. Green, "A Method for Undertaking a Full Conservation Audit of Special Collections of Books and Manuscripts," *Collection Management* 28 (2003): 23–42; Jennifer E. Hain, "A Brief Look at Recent Developments in the Preservation and Conservation of Special Collections," *Library Trends* 52 (Summer 2003): 112–17; Susan G. Swartzburg, *Preserving Library Materials: A Manual* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1995); Katherine Swift, "The Oxford Preservation Survey 1: The Main Survey," *The Paper Conservator* 17 (1993): 45–52; and Nancy Bell, "The Oxford Preservation Survey 2: A Method for Surveying Archives," *The Paper Conservator* 17 (1993): 53–55.

[5] Ritzenthaler, *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts,* 11.

[6] Beth Patkus, *Assessing Preservation Needs: A Self-Survey Guide* (Andover, Mass.: Northeast Document Conservation Center, 2003). This document is available on the NEDCC Web site at http://nedcc.org/oldnedccsite/selfsurvey/intro.htm, accessed 23 January 2007.

[7] Ritzenthaler, *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts,* 12.

Funding Proposal

The Washington Preservation Initiative (WPI), a competitive program funded through the federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and administered by the Washington State Library, offered an opportunity for funding.[8] This program explicitly supported surveys as a project category, and in 2003 we developed a proposal for a collection survey. In structuring our proposal, we considered the data we needed to gather in order to assess the overall conditions of our collections, the maximum possible award amount, and the schedule that would define the grant period. The grant proposal outlined five elements: (1) developing a methodology for the survey; (2) developing and testing a survey form; (3) hiring a graduate student to conduct a large part of the survey; (4) working with the graduate student to conduct the survey (approximately 1,300 hours); and (5) performing preservation treatments on collections already identified as high priorities. The manuscript portion of this final element included a large preservation photocopying project for one particularly significant collection, the L. V. McWhorter Papers.[9]

Our funding proposal was successful, and we were awarded $20,000, the maximum amount. The grant provided eight months to complete the proposed work plan, from January through August 2004, with an option to request a one-month extension. This timetable put the project on a tight deadline, but also presented a rare opportunity. Because the grant period coincided with the university's academic calendar, we were able to structure a half-time graduate assistantship during the spring semester and summer session 2004, rather than hiring temporary employees on an hourly basis. This appointment benefited both the WSU Libraries, which had not previously offered an assistantship, and the student selected.

Survey Methodology

As we made decisions about survey methodology, we tried to be as practical as possible to maximize the usefulness of the data and to be efficient in our approach. We believed that collecting condition information and making treatment recommendations at the collection level would contribute best

[8] Information about the Washington Preservation Initiative is available at http://www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/projects/preservation.aspx, accessed 8 August 2006.

[9] This is the most heavily used manuscript collection in MASC, consisting primarily of manuscripts on brittle, acidic early twentieth-century papers, and heavy use was accelerating its deterioration. A finding aid is available at http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/holland/masc/McWhortr/Mcwh1.htm, accessed 31 July 2006.

to planning treatment projects, in part because the collection is already the customary "unit" for many projects in MASC—processing, for example. We thought collection-level information would be more useful than, for example, either a comprehensive box-level survey or a sampling of all the holdings.

Once our external funding and a defined timetable were in place, we determined that the manuscripts portion of the survey would focus on collections consisting primarily of paper documents. We excluded the few collections consisting mostly of other media such as audio and video recordings; we also excluded segregated oversized manuscript material. We recognized the need to gather evidence of the condition of these materials for a complete assessment of our collections, but we believed it more efficient and effective to address these special categories separately. They are easily identifiable in our collection descriptions, making it relatively simple to identify the universe of such material to be assessed, and they represent a small fraction of our manuscript collections. They should lend themselves well to smaller-scale, format-focused projects in the future.

We began planning the manuscript survey by calculating the approximate extent of all processed collections, which are organized in two separate groups: a main numbered sequence, approximately 5,400 linear feet, of collections ranging in extent from a single box to several hundred boxes; and a separately numbered sequence of small collections, approximately 64 linear feet, generally consisting of no more than a single folder of material. We developed general guidelines based on collection extent. For the main sequence of collections, we planned to examine each box for all collections of twenty or fewer boxes; for larger collections, with some exceptions, we planned to use sampling. For the sequence of small collections, each generally not more than a single folder, we planned a more detailed examination at the item level. We excluded a few collections from the survey, most notably two large twentieth-century collections that had been recently processed (approximately 925 linear feet in total). As the survey progressed, we eventually excluded twenty-four more collections, because we found them to be incompletely processed or because we determined that they were candidates for reappraisal. We prioritized these for later assessment. After exclusions, we surveyed approximately 4,400 linear feet of manuscripts, including approximately 600 collections in the main sequence surveyed at the box level or by sampling and approximately 1,700 small collections surveyed at the item level.

At the beginning of the project, we produced two draft survey forms, one for manuscripts and the other for photographs, each with separate sections for evaluating collection housing and collection contents. Designed to be completed manually, these paper forms included checkboxes to expedite completion and also provided room for written comments for each question. We tested the draft forms on several collections and made minor revisions. For example,

after observing problems with small, loose items in one of our test collections, we added a question about problems with mixed-size material[10] (see Fig. 1).

Execution of Survey

The special collections librarian directed the historical photograph survey; as manuscripts librarian, I directed the manuscripts survey. The graduate assistant worked on both surveys under our joint supervision. Early in the project, I determined the collections I would survey myself and those I would assign to the graduate assistant. In some cases, this determination was arbitrary, simply to divide the work so it could all be accomplished, but in other cases I preferred to survey certain collections myself based on existing information about condition problems or on the significance of the materials involved. I also decided which collections larger than twenty boxes we would survey comprehensively rather than by sampling. Except for a guideline to examine at least twenty boxes for each sampled collection, we did not establish an overall methodology for sampling, but determined sampling strategies for these collections on a case-by-case basis. We used container lists in our finding aids as a tool to determine the categories of materials in each collection (for example, correspondence, field notes, diaries, maps), and we identified specific boxes to examine to capture all major categories or formats represented.

For each box we examined, we made an overall observation of the contents based on the elements included on the survey form, and then we pulled at least one folder for a closer evaluation of contents; pulling additional folders if the collection included a variety of formats, or if it seemed to be in poor or unstable condition. We completed a survey form for each collection or, in the case of the small collections, for each box, and placed a sticker on the first box of each collection indicating that the survey for that collection had been completed.

While we typically limited our activities to making observations about the condition of each collection, it became apparent that it would be efficient to treat some of the smaller collections "on the fly," as time permitted. If a collection could be treated in a relatively short period of time—perhaps an hour or two—it made sense to do so, as we were already handling the materials for the survey. These simple treatments included fastener removal, addition of interleaving, addition of spacers or minor redistribution of contents, and replacement

[10] This form (along with many of the other tools developed for this project and information about the photograph portion of the survey) is available on the MASC Web site at http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/holland/masc/preservationsurvey.html, accessed 31 July 2006. Another potentially useful tool became freely available after the execution of the MASC preservation survey. This is the "Special Collections Materials Survey Instrument" developed by the Columbia University Libraries. It is available at http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/services/preservation/surveyTools.html, accessed 8 August 2006.

2004 Preservation Survey
Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections
WSU Libraries
Manuscript Collections

Collection Reviewed by (name): Cheryl Gunschman
All Boxes Checked? ✓ Sampled?

Collection Information

Cage: 213
Name: Simms John
Date reviewed: 6/10/04 Comments on reverse side? ✓

	Yes	No	Comments (check here if more attached _____)
1. Boxes			
a. Good condition?	✓		
b. Too full?	✓		esp. 1 + 2
c. Not full enough?		✓	
2. Folders			
a. Acid-free?		✓	
b. Good condition?		✓	
c. Too full?	✓		
3. Paper/Contents			
a. General condition (check one): Good__ Fair__ Poor✓			dirty, damaged
b. Acidic/brittle/badly yellowed?	✓		small amt. Interleaving: Added ✓ Needed ✓
c. Fasteners removed?	✓		removed during survey
d. Problems with mixed-size material? (small insertions, etc.)	✓		some small items throughout
e. Fading to illegibility?	✓		fading ink
f. Includes folded items that cannot be unfolded without damage?		✓	
g. Includes scrapbooks or other books?	✓		business record books + notebook, Box 3

FIGURE 1. Manuscript survey form completed.

of acidic enclosures. The collections we treated during the survey were typically no larger than one or two linear feet. When we determined that items were in urgent need of treatment, so unstable or damaged that they were unsuitable for use by researchers, we immediately referred them to the conservation lab for expert attention.

The survey revealed no real "horrors," although we found condition problems in many collections. We were able to rescue most materials, even if they were badly damaged. Some problems resulted from earlier preservation actions; for example, well-meant homemade attempts to make protective enclosures from plastic wrap and transparent tape had shrunk with the years and deteriorated into a sticky mess. We were occasionally surprised by items we found; the most striking example, as seen in figure 2, was a fully functioning iron animal leg trap in one of the sampled manuscript cases.[11]

We observed a wide variety of condition problems, as well as some collections in good condition. Most collections needed at least some preservation treatment. In many cases, we observed the need for basic treatments, such as removal of rusty or sharp fasteners; replacement of acidic, damaged, or inadequate enclosures; and redistribution of contents in over- or underfilled containers. These treatments will require only simple supplies and can easily be performed by temporary employees or by staff other than the conservator, given a small amount of training and the time necessary for the work.

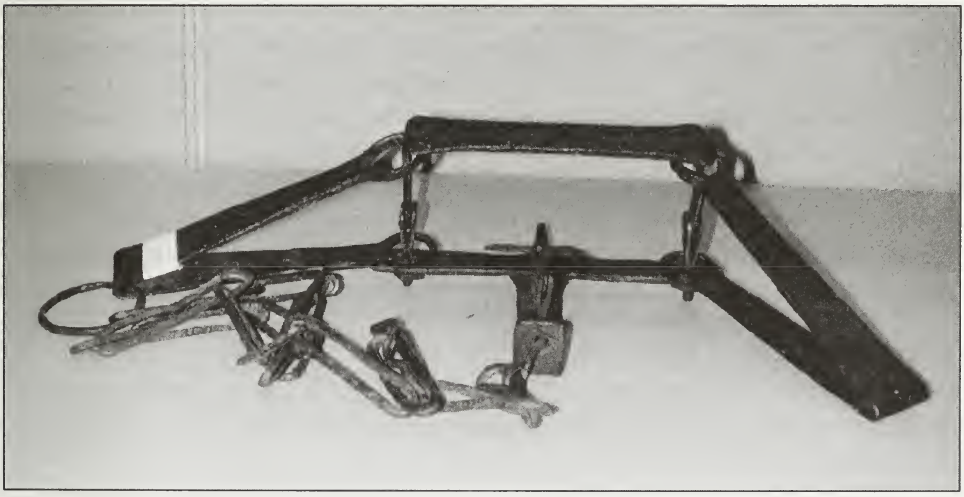


FIGURE 2. Trap included in the Carl Parcher Russell Papers.

[11] This item was part of the Carl Parcher Russell Papers (Cage 225). A finding aid for this collection is available at http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/holland/masc/finders/cg225.htm, accessed 31 July 2006.

In addition to the survey of the physical condition of the manuscript collections, I decided to examine existing on-line finding aids and catalog records for each collection, even though this required extra time. My reasoning here was similar to the rationale for conducting limited preservation treatments in conjunction with the survey: it made sense to do this as we were already physically handling each collection. I knew from prior experience that a few collections lacked on-line cataloging records and/or finding aids, and others had access tools that needed editing or correction.[12] As time permitted, I addressed these issues. Within a few weeks after the end of the grant period, I was able to complete nearly all of this additional work, an unanticipated but important benefit of the project.

Throughout the survey project, we tracked our progress toward completion as part of our regular reporting schedule to the granting agency. We kept track of the number of collections and the number of linear feet surveyed. Even with the addition of activities not included in our fairly ambitious work plan, we came close to completing the project within the eight-month grant period. Toward the end of the project, to help us finish on time, I used additional paid time for myself and the conservator not programmed as part of the grant. We successfully requested a one-month extension and finished the project in that time.

While it was not the purpose of this survey to determine the cause(s) of condition problems in our collections, questions about causes inevitably arose. In some cases, it was clear that materials had been received in poor condition—sometimes stable, but sometimes not. These cases of "inherent vice" had been handled in a variety of ways during processing, from a minimum of no treatment at all (the item might simply have been shelved) to intensive treatments such as mending and lamination. In other cases, materials received in good condition had deteriorated after processing, most often because of problems associated with housing, adhesives, acid migration, and sharp or rusted fasteners.

Phase 2: Preservation Plan

After submitting a second successful proposal for $20,000 in WPI funding for the following year (2005), we were able to continue the work begun with the survey. This second phase included several elements: (1) the creation of preservation treatment recommendations and the assignment of a priority ranking for each collection; (2) the creation of a database tool for compilation and analysis

[12] The most common errors were typographical. Some of these appeared to have been introduced when typescript finding aids were converted to digital format using optical character recognition (OCR) software, and they had not been caught during earlier proofreading. Other errors or problems included incorrect extent information, absence of links from catalog records to on-line finding aids (or bad links in the 856 field of the MARC record), or box and folder sequence errors in container lists.

of survey results and treatment recommendations; (3) entry of data; and (4) creation of a preservation plan based on the priority ranking and categories of treatment recommended. This comprehensive plan included data about each collection and about categories of treatment recommended across collections, all ranked by priority on a simple four-point scale based on significance of the material and risk because of condition (both determined by the librarian) (see Figs. 3 and 4).

To create the database, we hired a student employee with appropriate technological skills. She used Microsoft Office Access to create a simple database with four modules: (1) survey data for manuscripts, (2) survey data for photographs, (3) preservation recommendations, and (4) a draft module for the conservation lab to keep treatment records. Each of these modules supports the creation of simple reports based on specified data elements. For example, in the preservation recommendations module, we can generate reports by category of treatment recommended.[13]

Unlike the first three modules, which were developed to capture information about collections at a specific point in time, the treatment recordkeeping module was developed in draft form only because the tool we ultimately adopt for this function needs to support ongoing activities. We believe there may be better alternatives for capturing this information, and we want to investigate all of our options thoroughly. We need to adopt a simple, useful, and sustainable tool; ideally, it will support preservation recordkeeping as part of a larger management information system. We are particularly interested in the potential usefulness of the Archivists' Toolkit currently under development.[14]

Toward the end of this project, we developed a simple recordkeeping system for tracking the implementation of the plan. We created a paper form to record preservation treatments performed for each collection. To measure progress on the execution of the plan as a whole, we transferred this information onto a spreadsheet. If we decide to complete the preservation recordkeeping module of our home-grown database, or if we adopt some other tool for this purpose, it should be simple to transfer and combine this information with data about preservation of other MASC collections, facilitating more complex measurement, analysis, and management of our preservation activities (see Fig. 5).

At the end of the second WPI-funded project, we had treated approximately 161 linear feet of manuscript material, including all of the highest priority small manuscript collections. Due to the small size of these collections

[13] For more information, see "Comprehensive Preservation Survey of Manuscript and Photograph Collections, 2004–2005" at http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/holland/masc/preservationsurvey.html, accessed 31 July 2006, or contact the author.

[14] The Archivists' Toolkit project Web site is available at http://archiviststoolkit.org/index.html, accessed 2 August 2006.

WSU 2004 Preservation Survey - Manuscripts

Cage #	213		
Collection Name	John A. Simms papers, 1858-1881		
Collection Reviewed by:	Cheryl Gunselman		
All boxes checked? ✓	Sampled? ☐	Date Reviewed	6/10/04

Boxes	Yes?	No?	
Good Condition?	✓	☐	
Too Full?	✓	☐	esp. 1,2
Not full enough?	☐	✓	
Folders			
Acid-free?	☐	✓	
Good condition?	☐	✓	
Too full?	✓	☐	
Paper/Contents			
General Condition: Poor			dirty, damaged
	Yes?	No?	
Acidic/brittle/badly yellowed?	✓	☐	
Interleaving Added?	✓	☐	
Interleaving Needed?	✓	☐	
Fasteners Removed?	✓	☐	removed during survey
Problems with mixed-sized material? (small insertions, etc.)	✓	☐	some small items throughout
Fading to illegibility?	✓	☐	fading ink
Includes folded items that cannot be unfolded without damage?	☐	✓	
Includes scrapbooks or other books?	✓	☐	business record books and notebook. Box 3
Comments on Reverse	✓	☐	Gudrun-please assess. Interleaving needed throughout-boxes are too full to do this during survey. (some 8 1/2 x 14)

FIGURE 3. Survey data for one collection entered into database.

WSU Preservation Survey Plan

Cage # 213 Priority: 1-highest

	Yes/No	
Redistribute contents/box too full	✓	b1,2
Replace boxes/enclose loose items		
Box too empty/redistribute contents/add spacers		
Replace folders - acidic	✓	
Replace folders - too full	✓	
Replace folders - condition		
Add folders - loose/unfoldered material present		
Replace folders - size		
Folder labels/numbers needed		
Fasteners present - evaluate for removal		
Add l/lvg/gather small insertions	✓	
Photo housing needed		
Conservator evaluate	✓	
Librarian evaluate	✓	see notes about document sizes, damage and dirt
Repair or encapsulation needed		
Preservation copies needed	✓	fading ink
General Notes		
l/lvg added during survey	✓	
Other treatment done during survey	✓	fasteners removed

FIGURE 4. Recommendations for one collection entered into database.

Preservation Treatment Form (Manuscripts)				
CAGE #:				
Collection name:				
Treatment category	**√**	**Date treated**	**Treated by**	**Notes**
Housing				
Boxes replaced				
Contents redistributed				
Spacers added				
Folders replaced				
Folders labeled				
Loose material enclosed				
Fasteners removed				
Photo housing added				
Polyester sleeves added				
Interleaving added				
Items encapsulated				
Items sent to lab				
Pres. copies produced				
Other reformatting				
Other treatment				
General notes				

FIGURE 5. Preservation treatment form (manuscripts)

and the types of material they include—often particularly rare and/or significant items—treatments were in many cases more intensive than those for larger collections; for example, many fragile items were repaired, and many folded items were flattened and relocated to oversize storage.[15]

Clearly, having a plan does not necessarily guarantee its full execution. Our most severe constraint is finite resources, which will affect the speed and intensity with which we implement the plan. But with a plan in place, it is now possible for us to improve the condition of processed manuscript collections systematically on an ongoing, routine basis. We also expect the plan to be useful for soliciting additional external financial support. We gathered and analyzed concrete evidence of our preservation needs, which will help us to demonstrate those needs to potential donors or granting agencies (see Figs. 6 and 7).

Outcomes

Our survey and the subsequent creation of a prioritized preservation plan for manuscript collections have already had a noticeable, positive impact. Approximately two years after the beginning of the survey project, this impact is evident in a variety of areas. Some of these, primarily the improved condition and stability of collections, we anticipated when the project was conceived; others, such as improved collection descriptions, we did not. These unanticipated outcomes were generally a direct result of the time-consuming, and admittedly sometimes tedious, process of physically handling so many collections in a relatively short period of time.

Though we failed to generate metrics for a manuscript collection preservation survey because of our decision to combine the survey project with other activities, we can make some general observations that may be useful for other institutions considering such a project—things we might do differently if we did this again. We could have saved time, and worked more efficiently, if we had done more sampling in some collections (or series within collections) comprised of fairly homogeneous material. In these cases, it is not terribly useful to examine each box, because problems, if any, are usually fairly consistent from one box to the next. But collections or series comprised of heterogeneous materials may warrant more careful examination, and problems in these collections are more variable. Some patterns we observed continued from one collection to the next in a collection number sequence, perhaps as a result of decisions made by a particular processor. Thus, sequential groups of collections sometimes shared condition problems, such as overstuffed folders or boxes.

[15] The intensive treatment of one collection consisting of bank notes and currency is illustrated under "Encapsulation" on the MASC conservator's Web site: http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/holland/masc/conserve.htm, accessed 31 July 2006.

FIGURE 6. Box of loose material from the Walt Horan Papers being treated and foldered.

In part because of the way the work described here was funded, and in part because we learned as we went along, we missed some efficiencies that other institutions using a different project structure might incorporate. We executed two separate projects, the second arising directly from the first. Our focus at the beginning of the first project was to gather data about the condition of our collections; we did not begin planning until later in the process just how we would go about translating our observations into recommendations for action. In a different project structure, well-trained staff members and/or temporary employees, with sufficient resources and time, could certainly make these recommendations in conjunction with such a survey. In our case, we generated the recommendations separately as part of the second grant, as an essential step in producing our preservation plan.

Had we found an existing database usable for our project, such a tool might also have introduced more efficiency into the process, especially if it had enabled us to enter survey data and preservation recommendations directly into the database using a laptop or other portable device. This would have eliminated the need for the separate data-entry step associated with the paper forms.

FIGURE 7. Box from the Lewiston-Clarkston Improvement Company Records prior to treatment.

As a result of these projects, the manuscript collections in MASC will be more stable and will better withstand the stresses of storage and handling. Improvement is evident in the condition of collections treated to date. Some badly deteriorating materials were stabilized during the course of the project. Unlike our previous ad hoc approach, the preservation needs of the manuscript collection have now been systematically identified and prioritized in an action plan. These preservation priorities are now incorporated into the normal work flow of the manuscripts librarian, the conservator, and other MASC staff, including temporary employees. During 2004 and 2005, approximately 30 percent of my time was devoted to these projects or related preservation activities.

We have improved intellectual access and reference services as a result of this project. I became much more familiar with many individual manuscript collections and gained a better understanding of the collections as a whole with regard to content and description as well as physical condition. We created, corrected, or edited over a hundred cataloging records during the project; we also corrected or edited many on-line finding aids, and in a few cases, we created new finding aids for collections lacking them. In retrospect, it would

have been useful to integrate this element more formally into the survey by including information about access tools on the survey form, rather than maintaining a manual checklist that is not integrated with the survey data.

One of the most important results of the survey and preservation plan is the balancing of departmental priorities. Processing projects remain a high priority for our unit, which has a substantial backlog. Because these projects often compete for the same limited resources of personnel, equipment, and supplies required to preserve already-processed collections, the preservation plan will assist us in balancing the allocation of these resources.

The projects described here will positively affect our unprocessed collections; indeed, what we have learned is already influencing our processing decisions and practices. Having observed the consequences of various decisions made during processing decades ago, we are better able to anticipate the long-term effects of our current processing procedures, particularly those associated with housing. The three most common problems we encountered were underfilled manuscript cases that failed to support materials sufficiently, overstuffed folders that stressed documents, and the lack of secure enclosures for small, loose items. This knowledge will inform our consideration of other processing models for our backlog, such as Greene and Meissner's "More Product Less Process" approach.[16] If we adopt some elements of that minimal approach to processing collections, the lessons we learned during the survey project have prepared us to anticipate their potential consequences within our institutional context.

The project also revealed the attractive prospect of recapturing some much-needed shelf space in our manuscripts storage area. We discovered that some large collections occupied substantial amounts of extra space due to underfilled containers, which are both harmful to the contents and inefficient. When we complete our treatment of these collections, we hope to recapture over 200 linear feet of shelf space for other collections.

In a few cases, we discovered (or rediscovered) forgotten "treasures." The most significant was a papal bull issued by Innocent III in 1216. These items were all cataloged—so clearly they were not lost—but somehow they had not come to our attention until this project required us to examine our collections in depth. We have incorporated some of these treasures into MASC instructional and liaison activities with academic departments.[17]

[16] Mark A. Greene and Dennis Meissner, "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing," *American Archivist* 68 (Fall/Winter 2005): 208–63.

[17] A Web page for the papal bull, including images, transcription, and translation, is available on the MASC Web site at http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/holland/masc/papalbull.html, accessed 8 August 2006.

Conclusion

Our experience of gathering and analyzing data about the condition of our collections has confirmed information we found in the professional literature, particularly regarding the advantage of systematic assessment activity for evidence-based planning and action.[18] Historically, acquisition and processing of manuscript collections has been a higher priority in MASC, as in many other archival repositories, than assessing (or reassessing) already-processed collections. Our prioritized preservation plan makes it possible to bring materials in processed collections into normal preservation work flow. Unstable or at-risk materials are stabilized or reformatted and preserved for future use. We are making progress toward our goal to ensure that all collections are as stable and physically sound as possible to ensure continued access.

[18] See Walters, "Special Collections Repositories at Association of Research Libraries Institutions," 169.

BOOK REVIEWS

If Ever Two Were One: A Private Diary of Love Eternal

Kept by Francis Ellingwood Abbot, 1855–1903. Edited by Brian A. Sullivan. New York: Regan Books, 2004. 283 pp. Illustrated. ISBN 0060564113.

More than once during my archival career I have heard my colleagues joke that the real reason they became archivists is that they get to read other people's mail. To put it more professionally, one might say that archivists have a talent (and, add to that, the skill as they develop historical knowledge of their collections) for recognizing and appreciating the many different stories and themes to be found in the papers and records in their archives. Brian Sullivan, a reference archivist at the Harvard University Archives when he first made note of the Francis Abbot diary, is one who can recognize a good story. He chose to promote this collection of the papers of a Harvard alum first as an item of potential interest to *Harvard Magazine.* Publicity there then attracted the interest of an outside publisher and led to Sullivan's subsequent work as editor of a full-length published book, a book he chose to dedicate "To the untold love stories in attics and archives everywhere."

If Ever Two Were One is not a scholarly book in the sense that it touches fairly superficially on Francis Abbott's religious and teaching career. The book is not the more popular type of "travel diary," although it contains a brief and interesting account of a journey to the Azores in the summer of 1879. Nor is the book focused sufficiently on everyday people in a way that would help us understand the social history of its primary locales, Boston and Cambridge, Massachusetts. In editing *If Ever Two Were One,* Brian Sullivan has tackled the ambitious project of a book aimed at a general audience, one that focuses on ideas: the ideas of love and devotion as recorded in diaries, poems, and letters written by a highly educated, upper-class, nineteenth-century "Harvard" man, who considered his life's work to be that of thinker and poet.

One doesn't need to be a scholar to understand the phrase "dear diary" or think of a diary as a potentially intriguing repository of someone's innermost thoughts. In his foreword to the book, Sullivan proclaims: "When is a love story not relevant?" But how did he as editor transform the prose and poetry in the diary and other historical documents into a book directed to people of our generation, who thrive on quick text messaging; who rely on a PDA to record the daily activities of their lives; and who depend on Web sites to alert them to a multitude of competing cultural offerings, such as "*When We Were Punk,* and other short films about love."[1]

[1] See MIT Calendar, Monday, November 13, 2006,Three Experimental Short Films, Written and Directed by Pascal Rambert, http://events.mit.edu/event.html?id=6683965, accessed 30 January 2007.

The "private diary" as published in this book is a compilation of excerpts from several different sets of Abbot documents. The success of the book owes a lot to the skillful selection of material, the imagination to fit it into a logical story framework, and the thoughtful editorial comments that show the context of the documents. The journal Frank Abbot began in college is the starting point of the story, but letters between Frank and his wife, Katie Loring Abbot, are also used to supplement and complement diary entries. (Different type styles for each genre alert the reader to the different sources.) The letters between the two trace a dialogue from the earliest stages of courtship into marriage and allow the story of devotion and affection to be told in both the male and female voice. A smaller number of letters exchanged between Abbot and his mother offer a glimpse of another strong influence on him and express his passionate personality. The use of poems enhances the book and contributes to creating the atmosphere one associates with people passionate about ideas and each other. Abbot wrote most of the poems, but he copied several other favorites into his diary. A line from a poem attributed to Anne Bradstreet is the source of the book's title, "If ever two were one." Photographic images of the principals at different stages of their lives add visual interest and offer yet another way for the reader to recognize and connect to them. Specifically of note from an archival viewpoint are the images: the front cover of the diary is placed opposite page one of the journal text, and diary pages are interspersed throughout the interior of the book. One page illustrates the sentimental objects (a lock of hair and a pine chip) Abbot pasted into his diary, deliberately creating his own archives of a sort. These are wonderful elements in the book. The facsimile pages remind readers of the historical context of the original documents themselves, and in an exhibitlike fashion help to showcase the attraction of primary source documents in general.

Less appealing is the design of the book cover itself which seems excessively "flowery" even for a general audience and more appropriate to a greeting card. Such a treatment reminds us that some aspects of publication projects are not in our control. Archivists will appreciate two prominent pages at the end of the book. Notes on sources highlight collection information relating to the sources used for the book, and an extensive list of Acknowledgments credits many archivists by name for their assistance, indicating the richness and vast scope of materials sought and reviewed in preparation of the book. Among those acknowledged are Abbot descendants who loaned personal photographs to this enterprise. This nice connection between past and present reminds us professionals that interesting materials exist outside our institutions

The book contains the editorial elements one might expect to find in a published diary. The foreword summarizes the lives of the main authors, Frank Abbot and Katie Loring, and is written chronologically (the same way the text is presented). It covers major events in their lives beginning in 1857 when they first

met, introduces other characters, and in general provides the context that helps smooth the reader's entrance into the book before the reading actually starts. As there is no index to the book, this contextual information and introduction of other family member is important. Additional aids to the reader are a chronology and an Abbot family tree.

The foreword is descriptive and lyrical in style, setting the tone with a touch of drama. It states directly that Frank Abbot, having finished his philosophical treatise, went to Katie's grave on the tenth anniversary of her death, and, after placing a bouquet of flowers on it, drank poison to end his life. The reader thereby gets a clue as to how the story will end.

As is typical of a diary, the book is structured chronologically, and the material has been divided into six parts. The parts vary considerably in the extent of the time periods covered, with each new part distinguished by an introductory page consisting of an illustration and quote, a device that does help the reader move mentally to the next time period. Part one covers only two years in fifty pages and wonderfully describes Frank's student life at Harvard College, including teaching stints in Concord where he meets Ralph Waldo Emerson, boards with the parents of Henry David Thoreau, and most crucially begins his courtship and becomes engaged to Katie Loring. There's definitely an air of Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, except that the story of Frank and Katie is real. The reader can enjoy and absorb much in part one.

The middle of the six parts is weaker, as it skips and spans a greater number of years. These reveal some of the harsher realities of the Abbots' lives in contrast and also as testament to their continuing story of love and devotion. Less information is included, and at times the book devolves to a rather bare presentation of ill fortune—professional and financial setbacks, loss of children, Katie's ill health—topics most do not want to dwell on, but fewer detailed excerpts from the documents provide less upon which the reader can reflect. It is not clear whether Abbot recorded fewer thoughts during the more stressful times or if this material was more heavily edited. In the later parts, the selection again is richer.

Archivists who read this book will enjoy a good story wonderfully told. If they think about how the book was researched, written, and presented, they will recognize some familiar territory. Reference archivists review multiple sources to find the answers to questions. Collection managers consider how different types of records have value and can be used together to tell a fuller and more dynamic story. Finding the right story and the blending of visual and textual documents will remind other archivists of their own outreach and exhibit efforts.

Archivists may be inspired after reading this book to venture further (within the principles of the SAA Code of Ethics) or to collaborate with others in publishing efforts that expose their collections more broadly, making both the contents and the contexts accessible. At the very least, archivists will appreciate the direct praise to archives in the epilogue of the book. There the editor ends

by reminding us that the documents that together make up this story are fortunately preserved in archives, where he discovered that they are "somehow more permanent than marble" monuments in a graveyard.

Elizabeth Andrews
Institute Archives and Special Collections
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Understanding Archives and Manuscripts

By James M. O'Toole and Richard J. Cox. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2006. xvii, 237 pp. Available from the Society of American Archivists, $35.00 members, $49.00, nonmembers. ISBN 1-931666-20-2.

If there are any shortcomings to this intelligent contribution to the Archival Fundamental Series II, they derive only from the fact that archives as a profession and as an academic discipline have come so far so fast in the last twenty years that a true understanding within the confines of 146 pages is nearly impossible to achieve. Facing that challenge, James O'Toole and Richard Cox, two of the more provocative thinkers in the archival profession, have provided a text that is both fundamental and challenging. After reading the book, one simply wants to know more. Rather than a tightly woven presentation of fundamental principles, O'Toole and Cox survey the larger fabric of what constitutes archival thought and practice, including many of the frayed intellectual edges of archival inquiry that make the profession and an understanding of it extremely exciting.

This edition is a revision of an earlier book authored solely by O'Toole and published in 1990 as a part of the first archival fundamentals series of the Society of American Archivists. It is interesting to reflect on that series and the motivation behind its publication. The "manuals" of that series were driven much more by a perceived need to communicate procedures and processes that defined archival work. The definition of an archivist in those days was based primarily on what an archivist did day to day. The O'Toole contribution to that series was to push the idea that the day-to-day work was based on historical connections to the process of recordkeeping and also certain cultural understandings about the importance of records. For O'Toole, being an archivist was not only defined by the nature of the work but also by the issues the archivist confronted and the place of the archivist in a historical continuum of the need for societies to record and retain information. So, like the earlier edition, this new and substantially revised edition is both fundamental and challenging. However, in its challenges to the reader, the book makes its most substantial contributions.

On the fundamental side, the book provides a survey of archives in varied forms and uses. As in its first edition, the book explains various forms of recordkeeping and associated technologies, including writing, filing, copying, and

storage. The historical perspective in this section enriches a basic understanding of *archives* and *record* as words commonly used but rarely understood. In addition, the section on "computerized information," while obviously important, is presented in a rather matter-of-fact way that belies its revolutionary impact and the potential of new information technologies for archival practice. A follow-up section on "characteristics of recorded information in the modern age," while extremely interesting with regard to issues relating to democracy, literacy, and access, is remarkably brief on issues relating to the broader context of the information revolution. The subject is revisted in the final chapter on challenges, though the discussion is brief and not connected to the earlier historical section. These sections, when assembled, provide a very useful historical perspective on issues that will inform a discussion of newer technologies, but the book itself does not engage these issues in a sustained way.

As in its earlier edition, the book also engages the development of the archival profession in ways that are extremely important and useful. Those coming to the idea of archives for the first time often misunderstand the difference between manuscripts and archives. The book nicely elaborates the history of manuscript collecting in the United States and the importance of that activity in forming a particular historical consciousness that infused later developments in the formation of state, and, ultimately, a national archives. The authors also explain nicely the consonant interest in the publication of records and the importance of that activity as derived from varied collecting institutions. The section on the "crucial" decade of the 1930s is particularly important. In it, the authors discuss the shift to more government-oriented archival methodologies derived from the work of the British and the Dutch. Perhaps reflecting my own biases, I would have liked more on that conceptual link to well-established continental practice. Archivists by and large still work within a well-constructed national framework for understanding, defining, and implementing practice. Though, as the authors note, the National Archives circular (1939) by T. R. Schellenberg was influential in bridging that gap. Awareness of the rich intellectual traditions of continental Europe that constitute an understanding of archives in those countries has not been integrated well into our own understandings

The most contained of the sections relates to the archivist's tasks and responsibilities. That section, in conjunction with the useful and important bibliographic essay at the end of the book, provides a very nice and complete picture of what one might expect to do once he or she becomes an archivist. Of all the sections in the book, this is probably the most fundamental and useful to someone using it to decide if the field is the right one to enter.

Apart from the discussion of archival fundamentals, the book has enormous value not only because it presents the field to those new to the idea of archives, but because it pushes readers to think about the frontiers of thought

that confront the archival profession today. This aspect of the book, as complement to the discussion of fundamentals, makes it worthy reading for all archivists. Again, reflecting my own biases, I would have liked more here. But then again, this is a part of the fundamentals series.

In the final analysis, this book should serve as an introduction to "read more about it." The number of pointers to further reading in this short book are quite remarkable. The brief final chapter challenges the reader to think about the discourse based on postmodern sensibilities that is popular among select archivists. Who at first glance would think of archives as related to anything postmodern? For some coming to the idea of the profession for the first time, *archives* and *modern* seem contradictory terms. So we can all be grateful to O'Toole and Cox for advising their readers of these very complex and unresolved discussions among archivists. Other challenges cited here include advocacy, "Internet time," ethics, security, and digital archives. The essence of the final chapter conveys what exciting times these are to be an archivist. The issues that face the profession are intellectually complex and technically sophisticated. After reading this section, who would not find such a profession of interest! The book pushes its reader to want a fuller understanding of archival issues.

The volume is an excellent introduction to archives, both as an intellectual endeavor and as a place for practical work. For instructors of archival courses, this book provides a syllabus of topics that could each stimulate a sustained discussion. The book's strength is in its reach and its breadth. It has surveyed the archival landscape and reports on findings that are rich in possibilities. For the authors, understanding archives means appreciating many things: a centuries-old intellectual tradition; a discourse that is multinational in origin; theory and practice undergoing technological change for over a century; a system of thought paired to our understanding of organizations and their behaviors; a compilation of practice spread over a variety of institutional forms; and a set of challenges for the future that will require innovation and serious analytical ability. To cover this broad and important range of issues so succinctly and clearly is indeed an accomplishment and a much-needed contribution.

Francis X. Blouin, Jr.
Bentley Historical Library
University of Michigan

Preservation Management for Libraries, Archives and Museums

Edited by G. E. Gorman and Sydney J. Shep. London: Facet Publishing, 2006. xviii, 206 pp. Index. $125.00. ISBN-13: 978-1-85604-574-2; ISBN-10: 1-85604-574-9.

Preservation is the fundamental justification for the existence of archives, libraries, museums, historical societies, and other organizations that collect and provide access to cultural heritage resources. Without managed preservation actions, access over time is merely accidental. Since one cannot preserve what one does not possess, principled collection building has been an intimate co-conspirator with preservation in the establishment of such cultural heritage organizations as archives. The acts of identifying books, documents, artifacts, and images and bringing them into a space that Ross Atkinson once referred to as the "control zone" have been prime preservation functions of archival agents for millennia. Other technical and administrative processes, including cataloging, archival description, and the curatorial analysis of exhibition and publishing, add significant value to tangible and intangible artifacts and their aggregations. Preservation clearly functions as one of the common characteristics of cultural heritage organizations today.

The literature on preservation management is vast, rich, and international in character. Modern writing on preservation has its origins in the late nineteenth century, coinciding both with the increasing importance of evidence and record to the legitimacy of an industrializing democratic society and with the growing awareness that this very same evidential record could and would deteriorate if left unattended. Documenting the preservation challenge has gone hand-in-hand through most of the twentieth century with efforts to find technical and managerial solutions to what seems at times a heart-wrenching dilemma. The last two decades of the twentieth century, in particular, witnessed a truly significant outpouring of compelling literature on preservation addressed to particular professional specializations or focused on particular media. The *Bibliography of Preservation Literature* (Scarecrow, 2001), for example, lists nearly 6,000 entries published between 1983 and 1996. Writing on preservation in English shows a significant cross-fertilization of ideas and best practices across national borders, often backed by solid research and experience and steeped in appreciation for politically savvy collaborative actions at the state, national, and international levels. If a literature reflects the state of theory and practice in a field, then preservation is a significant success story for the cultural heritage community.

Increasingly in the past decade, the attention of preservation managers has been diverted from traditional preservation practices to defining—and, in a way, attempting to forestall—the preservation implications of information created or re-created in digital form. Beginning with efforts in the early 1990s to set preservation standards for the digital image conversion of text and

photographic materials, digital preservation has advanced to encompass planning, program development, and the design of technology systems to manage digital content from a preservation perspective. The literature on digital preservation issues is nearly as vast and perhaps is more nuanced than writing on traditional preservation practices. In the aggregate, however, there is relatively little literature that attempts to unify thinking on traditional preservation issues and the challenges of the digital world. It is rarer still to find writings addressed to the broad spectrum of cultural heritage professionals that build bridges between analogue and digital preservation from an international perspective.

Preservation Management for Libraries, Archives and Museums is an admirable attempt at such multifaceted writing on preservation. The work consists of eleven articles by sixteen authors from five countries. The authors are recognized experts and generally prolific writers in their particular professional niches. Together they chart a vision in which "historically separate cultural institutions are now converging to share limited resources" (p. xiv). The goal of the work is to reflect the diversity of preservation management in the contemporary information landscape—a diversity that often begins or ends with developments in the United States but is considered from the perspective of practitioners in England, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Australia, and Canada. Each article is well researched and documented. As with all diverse compilations, the quality of thought and writing varies; but as with most collected works, several of the articles stand out as rich contributions worthy of special consideration.

The articles in the volume attempt a fine balancing act between preserving the artifact and preserving information contained in the artifact. David Grattan and John Moses tackle the difficulty of such balance in their treatment of intangible heritage that is not easily recorded, including function and use, religious significance or practice, or artist's intent. Their examples draw from efforts to preserve aboriginal culture and language in Canada. In their separate chapters, Yola de Lusenet, a leader of the European Commission on Preservation and Access, and digital humanist Marilyn Deegan extend the debate over tangibles and intangibles by exploring what is lost and what is gained in creating surrogates from original cultural artifacts. Deegan's piece, in particular, is a handy summary of the debate over whether digitization can be considered a preservation reformatting strategy—a discussion given fuller treatment in *Digital Preservation,* the excellent book she has co-authored with Simon Tanner (Facet, 2006).

Continuing the balancing act, three chapters explore the preservation challenges presented by paper, audiovisual media, and born-digital artifacts. Each topic is sufficiently complex to warrant book-length treatment. The two pieces on audiovisual and born-digital resources by Australian archivists Bob Pymm and Barbara Reed are largely glosses on highly complex and evolving issues. Henk Porck and his colleagues at the Koninklijke Bibliotheek in the

Netherlands describe an important new approach to setting research priorities in paper conservation—one that strives for an efficient balance between preservation need and the value of enhanced access. This chapter deserves wide discussion within the traditional preservation community.

Two chapters explore the socio-cultural aspects of preservation practice. Dutch consultant Rene Teijgeler contributes a bracing and advice-laden essay on the impact of war on the cultural heritage, with special reference to conflicts in the Middle East. British archivist Helen Forde focuses on access to digital information and the implications of changing access strategies on the preservation mandate. Her chapter is most interesting for the ways it charts the common interests of archival programs on an international basis.

The volume could have benefited from a more comprehensive introduction; the opening piece contributed by John Feather that was intended to serve this purpose is a much truncated version of the argument Feather presents in his book-length treatment, *Managing Preservation for Libraries and Archives: Current Practice and Future Developments* (Ashgate, 2004). In their final essay on redefining the "collection" in the twenty-first century, the New Zealand editors of the volume, G. E. Gorman and Sydney Shep, conclude with a sweeping prediction that the cultural heritage institution of tomorrow will be a "new, hybrid species of coordinated collection activity driven by preservation management principles" (p. 193). If the other articles in this volume were more effective in serving as witnesses to the birth of a new convergence of archives, libraries, and museums, then the Gorman/Shep essay would be more convincing.

Although the volume falls significantly short of its goal of describing how preservation management is a unifying principle for cultural heritage institutions, the book nevertheless demonstrates how preservation issues must be defined, measured, and discussed holistically in the digital world.

PAUL CONWAY
University of Michigan

Political Pressure and the Archival Record

Edited by Margaret Proctor, Michael Cook, and Caroline Williams. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005. 345 pp. Soft cover. Available from the Society of American Archivists, $ 29.95 members, $ 42.00 nonmembers. ISBN 1-931666-15-6.

The day that I first sat down to write this review, two different stories of the conflict between government secrecy and archival ethics came through my inbox. The first story related to the National Archives of the United States making a secret pact with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in 2001, to allow the CIA to withdraw public access to records it believed had been improperly declassified. The

second story reported a case of the Federal Bureau of Investigation pushing the family of Jack Anderson and George Washington University to allow its agents to sift through Anderson's papers to remove any classified information. Both stories deal with political pressure that interferes with the archival record and show that the issues presented by this volume are as relevant as ever. *Political Pressure and the Archival Record* explores the intersection of politics and archives and serves as an excellent contribution to studies of archives and their role in society.

In 2003, a group of archivists, historians, and other interested parties convened at the Liverpool University Centre for Archive Studies to examine the ways that politics shape and affect archives. *Political Pressure and the Archival Record* represents the published proceedings of this conference and includes twenty essays by individuals from ten different countries on five continents. As Margaret Proctor, one of the editors of this volume and a convener of the meeting, notes in her introduction, the conference addressed the extent to which political realities and forces affect the creation, retention, preservation, and disposition of archival records. While acknowledging the inherent difficulties in defining the phrase "political pressure" and the extent to which political power can be infused into all levels of society, the conference sought to deal with instances of "sudden, deliberate, and blatant" expressions of power such as "invasion, war, terrorist actions, single acts of destruction." While some of the essays do focus on these extreme situations, many of them actually rely upon a broader and more subtle understanding of politics, emphasizing power relations among governments, institutions, and individuals.

With considerable topical overlap, the essays are split into six sections: The Historical Legacy; Access and the Public Interest; Ethical Dilemmas in the Public Service; Governments Under Pressure? Threats and Responses; At War: Records and International Conflict; and Modeling the Future. Most of the articles serve as historical and contemporary case studies of instances in which archives have run up against outside political influence. The finest of the essays cover topics including the fate of archives in the Asian-Pacific War, the complexities related to the documentation of the subjects of colonization, access issues related to the records created by the Tuskegee Syphilis Study, lessons learned from the Nordlinger Affair and the Heiner Affair, and the state of "information lockdown" instituted by the Bush administration. Of the many reasons to read this work, archivists and allied professionals will find it engaging, timely, international, and challenging.

The volume engages readers in several ways. At its simplest, most of these case studies make for easy reading and tell fascinating stories that involve archives. In both its historical and contemporary essays, there is nothing dry here. As but one example, Astrid Eckert's examination of the access issues surrounding records of the German Foreign Ministry of the Nazi era, which were seized by the Allied powers and repatriated to West Germany in 1956, makes for

absorbing reading. Eckert traces the effect of the shifting political realities of the Cold War when records that were initially open to any scholar, regardless of national origin, became closed to researchers on the eastern side of the Iron Curtain. Eckert's piece also describes archivists and archival records as vital players in the mechanisms of government and the processes of history. As Polish scholars are denied access to Nazi-era records beginning in the 1960s, based on concerns that researchers would use their findings for propaganda, one can trace an important element in the evolution of the Cold War.

Readers cannot come away from this book without an enhanced understanding of the often nuanced but fundamentally important role of archivists within modern society. After all, the archival record and its custodians come under pressure precisely because the information held in archives and records possesses a latent and combustible power. Archivists can feel affirmed by this; nonarchivists or those new to the field will find this implicit truth detailed in explicit ways.

In the preface, the authors cite the adage that "a week is a long time in politics." While certainly a great deal has changed since the papers were first delivered in July of 2003, the book retains a timely character. As cited above, it seems as though a week does not go by without a significant news story that intersects with the interests and responsibilities of archivists. Some of the more extreme instances of governmental misbehavior during the early years of the George W. Bush administration are detailed in Thomas Connors's essay, "The Bush Administration and 'Information Lockdown'." Connors provides a critical account of the information policy of the Bush administration in its first two-and-a-half years in power, describing it as "two-pronged, with a third prong waiting in the wings: (1) limit public access to government information while (2) increasing the government's ability to gather information on private individuals, plus (3) contemplating the creation and dissemination of false information to cover your actions." Keep in mind that Connors wrote this piece before the Bush administration's warrantless wiretapping activities came to light. Connors uses the evidence of government malfeasance to call archivists and their allies to arms, to "come together in a forum to research, discuss, write about, and popularize serious studies of the whys and wherefores of accountability in democratic governance and how information openness supports that." The issues inherent to this book are timely ones, and Connors promotes activism for archivists, which is necessary to identify problematic political issues, bring them to light, and fight against them.

The international scope of the book represents another real strength. Seeing one's own national issues juxtaposed with those of other nations allows us to understand that the problems resulting from political pressure stem from what appear to be the eternal struggles of power relations. Maureen Spencer's account of secrecy issues surrounding the legal trial of individuals involved

in the 1942 accidental sinking of the British submarine HMS *Thetis* echoes contemporary American debate about the rights of defendants in the War on Terror. In both instances, governments sought (or seek) to deny defendants access to evidence used against them in their trials, using national security as a justification. Making connections across boundaries can only assist in the archivist's struggle to protect the record from political pressure.

If I were to offer a minor criticism of this book, it would be that, with some exceptions, the essays are better at describing the political pressure than they are at advocating the means to fight it. Luckily, several writers counterbalance this critique, including Connors, Rick Barry, and the book's two most provocative authors, Chris Hurley and Verne Harris, whose work deserves special consideration.

Hurley's piece describes two political scandals involving archives in Australia, the Nordlinger Affair and the Heiner Affair, both of which concerned the improper disposal of public records by elected officials in a contested political climate. Hurley uses the lessons of these two affairs to explore methods of protecting the public record and to examine appropriate behaviors for archivists engaged in these protective practices. Hurley puts forward an uncomfortable and challenging assertion: that archivists' own actions should be held up to public and professional scrutiny and accountability. He calls for the establishment of benchmarks for our work, so that we can have a common set of standards against which our actions and decisions can be judged. He writes "while we lack the benchmarks against which particular appraisals, and the work of particular appraisers, can be judged by others against something like objective standards which give predictability to the task, any claim we might make to act as protectors of the public record must remain hollow." As an aspiration, Hurley's point resonates; we should strive for transparency in our own work, much as we push for it in the arenas of those whom our work documents. I remain skeptical of our capacity to develop objective standards for appraisal, however, and wonder about the wisdom of promoting this possibility to our constituents.

Verne Harris takes a decidedly different angle in a critique of the behavior of archival institutions and individuals, and one imagines him taking issue with Hurley's assertion that it is possible for archives to develop near objective standards for archival decision making. Through the context of the evolution of government archives in postapartheid South Africa, Harris argues that it is impossible for archivists to achieve impartiality and that pretending to do so allows us to take the "easy way out" of ethical dilemmas often faced when working with records. Instead, Harris urges archivists to understand that we, too, are political players and that we can use the power that springs naturally from the archive to work toward the cause of justice, rather than in the service of the powerful. Harris offers no prescriptive behaviors in this quest, only a compelling worldview that sees opportunities for archivists to engage in activities that improve society.

Harris's piece resonates more than any other in this fine volume, which, as a whole, consists of an important set of studies about the relationship between archives and power structures. The volume pushes us to conceive of our profession in broad terms, to reconsider critically our own relationships to the power structures that affect our work on day-to-day and professional levels, and to develop creative ways to counteract unwelcome political forces. Beyond what it is, this book is important for what it could portend: a new dialogue on the relationship between archives and politics and perhaps a true heeding of Harris's call for an Archives for Justice movement, an awakening of archivists to become engaged in social action. One hopes that the organizers of and participants in the conference succeed in furthering this work, drawing ever more archivists into it, and making this is a beginning, not an end.

TOM HYRY
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Yale University

The Scrapbook in American Life

Edited by Susan Tucker, Katherine Ott, and Patricia P. Buckler. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006. x, 332 pp. Illustrations. Notes. $25.95. ISBN 1-59213-478-5.

Here is a book for any archivist who has secretly (or even outwardly) wished he or she could make a scrapbook disappear. Of course, one would rarely dispose of a scrapbook, but far too often they "disappear" on our shelves: it is not easy to provide intellectual or physical access to them. The visual charm of scrapbooks is not easily translated into MARC records and findings aids. Digitized images, even those that show the layout of an entire page, can never completely replace the tangible appeal scrapbooks hold. Scrapbooks pose a particular preservation challenge, and fragility can make handling and exhibiting them difficult. But perhaps the most perplexing thing—although many of us are unaware of it—is how to read a scrapbook. Unlike diaries, correspondence, or other written sources, scrapbooks do not provide a narrative text that is immediately accessible for dissection and interpretation. A scrapbook can contain an assortment of text, printed ephemera, images, and even three-dimensional objects. Within this composition are layers of meaning applied by the creator, who frequently holds the key to decoding them. The lack of discernible context to explain how, why, or sometimes even by whom a scrapbook was assembled make them difficult sources with which to work.

To our rescue come Susan Tucker, Katherine Ott, and Patricia P. Buckler. The fifteen essays that comprise their edited volume, *The Scrapbook in American Life*, are, in essence, examples of how to use scrapbooks as sources in historical

writing. The editors explicitly pose that very question in their introduction, asking, "Scrapbooks are a pleasure to make and examine, but what guidance is there for those who want to analyze them and use them as evidence for understanding history?" (p. 13). This question has never been answered as meaningfully as it is in this book. Current literature on scrapbooks and albums (for examples, see the on-line bibliography compiled by Danielle Bias, Rebecca Black, and Susan Tucker) includes many short articles and essays, most of which focus on issues of preservation and physical composition; the history of scraps, ephemera, and chromolithography; and scrapbooks as a medium for women's self-expression.[1] This full-length volume, then, is a unique and essential addition to that list. The introduction offers perhaps the most comprehensive history of scrapbooks attempted to date, while the essays persuasively argue for the usefulness and significance of scrapbooks as historical sources.

The editors, all of whom have made extensive contributions to that literature, have gathered a group of contributors whose varied experience as historians, librarians, curators, and literary critics is reflected in the wide range of topics in this collection. The essays focus on scrapbooks created by men, women, and children; prominent writers and prostitutes; a young girl in a small, depression-era town; and an African American musician living in the South a decade or two earlier. The scrapbooks reflect different activities and pastimes, from advertising to missionary work, from courtship to practicing medicine. Different types of scrapbooks are represented here: trade-card scrapbooks, photograph albums, scrapbook houses for paper dolls, a scrapbook of recipes, and memory books. And scrapbooks from many different eras are covered: from photographs albums of the 1860s to a souvenir scrapbook from the 1893 Chicago world's fair to scrapbooks made by Japanese American students interned during World War II.

With such diversity, the editors provide an answer to their question. As the contributors here demonstrate, readers are free "to imagine any story they wish in connection with a whole scrapbook or a single artifact pasted inside it" (p. 25). And, certainly, many stories wait to be imagined in the pages of scrapbooks hidden on shelves. These stories are not told for mere entertainment (although they can be amusing and moving); these stories are essential contributions to American history and could be told with no other sources. As Jennifer Jolly notes in her essay, "A scrapbook can serve as a metaphor for history's coming into being and represents the very process of an individual's construction of history" (p. 91). Jolly and the other contributors succeed in showing both the historical development of scrapbooks and their significance as sources, taking care to examine them within their cultural context. The essays urge the reader to view scrapbooks in a new light, finding significance in the unexpected.

[1] "Scrapbooks and Albums, Theories and Practice: An Annotated Bibliography," at http://www.tulane.edu/~wclib/susan.html, accessed 30 January 2007.

The scope of topics covered by these essays is unusually broad for studies on scrapbooks. Such diversity is a real strength, providing examples of how scrapbook studies can broaden discussions of race, class, and gender. But as I read these essays, I wondered why they had been divided as they were. The editors chose to group the essays in two parts: "Manuscripts of Learning and Knowledge" and "Books of the Self." Part I "considers scrapbooks and albums intended primarily to support learning and transfer knowledge" (p. 22). Part II looks at scrapbooks created by "evolving individuals who collected materials more directly about their private selves." These scrapbooks were "used to aid in individual and group accumulation of memories and in identity" (p. 22).

Dividing the essays this way—based on how each scrapbook is primarily categorized—seems to force an unnecessarily narrow distinction, and it undermines the overall emphasis on the creative use of scrapbooks that the volume otherwise offers. Scrapbooks in either section could easily have been included in the other. For example, one could argue that the scrapbook of recipes created by several generations of southern women was intended to transfer knowledge (and it is in this section that the essay is placed); however, the scrapbook was also used to accumulate group memory—in this case, the memory of a family. Buckler's essay provides yet another example: while located in Part I, her argument hinges on scrapbooks as autobiographical composition. In their introduction, the editors describe the stories within scrapbooks as "chaotic and ambiguous" (p. 25). These attempts to classify scrapbooks within more narrow parameters would seem to contradict that viewpoint and limit the fluidity that makes scrapbooks such wonderful sources.

Except for the fact that almost every archival and special collection includes scrapbooks, archivists might wonder how this volume would be useful to them. On the surface, it isn't. It provides no advice on how to preserve scrapbooks; how to properly handle, store, or exhibit them; or how to provide better intellectual access to them. But, with further examination, this volume becomes clearly essential for archivists: rather than dwelling on how we do (or should do) what we do, it explains why we do what we do. In so doing, it provides a welcome dose of inspiration. It reminds us why we collect scrapbooks, and it should encourage us to promote scrapbooks as sources more often. After all, "scrapbooks, then, are a material manifestation of memory—the memory of the compiler and the memory of the cultural moment in which they were made" (p. 3).

JULIANA KUIPERS
Harvard University Archives

Managing Archives: Foundations, Principles, and Practice

By Caroline Williams. Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2006. xvii, 248 pp. Paper. Index. £39.00. ISBN 1-84334-112-3.

In less than 250 pages, Caroline Williams presents a succinct, up-to-date introduction to archival principles and practice in the English-speaking world, with a focus on the United Kingdom. Very few words are wasted in this straightforward guide for the beginning archivist; she succeeds in finding a balance between explanations of terms, theories, and standards, and practical guidance for applying them in real-world contexts. Williams serves as director of the master's program in Archives and Records Management at the University of Liverpool. Previously, she worked as a government archivist in Great Britain. Williams's pedagogical purpose and professional experience are both evident in this textbook.

Williams's book targets "those starting out as archive professionals," "students on archive, records, museums, library and information programmes," and "anyone who has taken responsibility for archives but without any prior experience." Although I do not fall into any of these categories, I still learned a great deal, particularly about international and British standards and practices. Moreover, her concise summaries of complex issues, for example, her step-by-step explanation for how to develop an acquisitions policy and strategy (pp. 40–49), or her twenty-one questions to consider when appraising materials (pp. 58–60), are useful for newcomer and experienced professional alike. Williams's text is highly structured, demarcated clearly with headings, and peppered liberally with bullet points and lists, all of which make this an easy book to pick up for reference. She also includes charts and inset boxes with examples.

The book is organized into eight chapters. After a preface and introduction to records and archives, Williams covers selection, appraisal, and acquisition; arrangement and description; access, reference, and advocacy; preservation; and management of an archives. In her introduction to records and archives, Williams deals effectively with the basics: the definition of a record, accountability, provenance, original order, and the life-cycle of a record. The section on the records continuum is one of the few places lacking a coherent explanation, and I wished for a graph to accompany her description of "record keeping-based activity as an ongoing movement in and through four dimensions and four axes," as well as more clarification than for the theory to "insinuate itself into your consciousness" (p. 13). Despite this, the chapter's strength is the brief discussion of the various contexts in which archives operate, ranging from the total archives approach in Canada to the split in American practice between the historical manuscript and public records traditions.

In the chapter on selection, acquisition, and appraisal, Williams proposes that by its end, a fledging archivist will be able to write an acquisitions policy,

develop an acquisitions strategy, establish processes for accessioning, apply appropriate methodologies in appraisal, and negotiate a donation or deposit. While I seriously doubt that anyone could set up a working accessioning system or be prepared to negotiate terms of a donation, let alone realize the human elements involved, based on the limited overview she provides, Williams does give enough background for someone to think through many issues, and she supplies bibliographic references for further study. Williams's strengths as a teacher and author shine brightest in her discussions of acquisition policies and appraisal methodologies. She argues that although there is widespread disagreement about appraisal, every archivist must do it, even with no right answers or value-free methodologies. She offers a menu of methodologies for consideration, including documentation strategies, the Minnesota Method, sampling, and Shellenberg's values. Despite accepting the potential validity of different appraisal practices, Williams makes some absolute statements: Do not compete with other institutions acquiring collections. Do not split up a collection. Do not cherry pick part of a collection because of its relevance to your collecting goals. It is interesting to contrast her flexibility in explaining theories with her strong opinions against particular, but sometimes common, practices. Nevertheless, her practicality in describing how to write a collection development policy and acquisition strategy is welcome. Using her examples and pragmatic points for consideration, an archivist could follow her guidance and emerge with a strong policy.

In the arrangement and description chapter, Williams is, again, overly optimistic about what someone could accomplish after reading it. While she provides a good introduction to archival arrangement as defined by *ISAD(G)* and various descriptive standards, the reader will not emerge ready to process collections, as she suggests. For American audiences, her discussion of archival arrangement with fonds (or groups), subfonds, series, files, and items is enlightening, particularly when considering the flexibility and variance in U.S. practice. She explains that fonds and subfonds are administrative, functional, or other divisions that reflect the administrative machinery that brings records into being, and that series pertain to the records themselves. Although focused on organizational or governmental records, she also addresses personal papers. While Williams is good at conceiving the work of processing, she glosses over the nitty-gritty details of carrying out the work. For description, Williams provides a short history of standards and reproduces the table of contents of *ISAD(G)*. Recognizing variance among standards, she advises a common-sense approach: use layperson's language, provide sufficient management information, be concise and easy to understand, appeal to broad research interests, and consider how much description any material is really worth. She mentions EAD and catalog records in passing, as well as various thesauri, databases, and standards for authority control; further reading is required to do justice to the topics. In

contrast to her tolerance for variety at the macrolevel, she voices strong opinions about odd specifics in this chapter as well, such as requiring that loose papers found in volumes be cataloged separately.

Williams's most passionate and focused chapter is on access, reference, and advocacy. For her, making archives "available to an ever-widening audience and in increasingly diverse ways" is the "ultimate archival function" (p. 117). Much of the chapter concerns the legal and professional context of access within the United Kingdom, with particular attention to the Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection Act. Archivists outside the United Kingdom may find useful her extended discussion of *Standard for Access to Archives.* This British report attempts to define quality in measurable ways for archival services. Quality is based on four key principles: equity, communication and openness, responsiveness, and effectiveness and efficiency. Williams's scope broadens in the second part of the chapter. She provides a useful checklist for the contents of a Web site or leaflet. She describes a researcher's visit as a six-stage process. She pragmatically asks readers to consider the level of service an archives can realistically provide and emphasizes the need for access policies to achieve equality of service. She concludes with an imperative to engage in outreach and advocacy. Borrowing methods from marketing, she explains how to market services and encourages market research to understand what the customer wants and needs.

In the preservation chapter, Williams hopes to prepare the reader to develop preservation policies and strategies, assess preservation needs, undertake preservation activities, and reformat materials. She certainly does not provide enough detail for the reader to start repairing documents, or scan and describe a digital surrogate, or understand how to evaluate preservation needs of a collection. However, the chapter will help the reader develop a preservation policy and strategy, know basic environmental requirements, and justify and plan a survey. Williams relies on the U.K.'s *Building Blocks for a Preservation Policy,* which includes a template for addressing acquisitions, security, the environment, access, emergency planning, reprographics, conservation, loans, and exhibitions. Williams also provides references to international and British preservation standards. The fragility of media materials and the challenges associated with electronic records do get brief mention, but she weakly offers no solutions or strategies for dealing with them. In contrast are her concrete, very specific suggestions for improving environmental conditions in a variety of situations, or on handling materials properly, for example, not to overload carts or pull books from the shelf by their spine. When considering digital preservation, Williams is much more current, mentioning the Open Archival Information System reference model and discussing various preservation technologies, such as refreshing, migration, or emulation.

The final chapter focuses on management techniques; for example, how to define aims and objectives, set up a business plan, and measure progress.

Williams borrows from popular management tools and applies them to archives. She recommends establishing SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timed) aims and objectives. Before developing these, she suggests conducting an environmental scan utilizing the SWOT method, that is, an analysis of strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats. For evaluating progress and accomplishment, she puts forward common performance indicators for evaluating input of resources, amount of work completed, quality of work, and cost per unit of outcome. For me, as an experienced professional with administrative responsibilities, this chapter was full of tidbits to use for planning and evaluation, yet I wonder how useful its contents are for the intended audience.

Overall, Williams deftly summarizes diverse practices and draws out basic principles. The book is especially noteworthy for leading the reader step-by-step in the creation of policies for many archival functions. Yet the book's strength is also its weakness; as a brief overview, it hits major points and provides practical guidance, but does not include the necessary depth to create a fully functional practitioner. If used in U.S. classrooms, the book must be supplemented with further readings reflecting the American context. However, the basic framework of the book, with its no-nonsense style and content, would serve well as a foundation upon which further knowledge and experience may build.

MICHELLE LIGHT
University of Washington Libraries
Special Collections Division

Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Social Memory: Essays from the Sawyer Seminar

Edited by Francis X. Blouin, Jr. and William G. Rosenberg. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2006. ix, 502 pp. ISBN-13: 978-0-472-11493-1.

This book and the 2000–2001 Sawyer Seminar cosponsored by the Bentley Historical Library are major milestones that mark the increasing participation of archivists in fostering the new understandings of records and archives that have come to the fore recently in many fields. These new views are a radical departure from the conventional idea that records are on the whole unproblematic conveyors of the information compiled by their initial inscribers, as long as archives keep them as inert evidence of this original provenance. This book suggests that records and archives cannot be assumed to convey faithfully and primarily information of this sort because they are not solely creations of their initial inscribers and cannot simply duplicate reality, while archiving cannot freeze them in their "original" state. But if this is true, what *are* records and archives, and what *do* they tell us?

The Sawyer Seminar at the University of Michigan invited nearly a hundred speakers to explore these kinds of questions. This interdisciplinary group included archivists, historians, anthropologists, literary scholars, and a geographer, lawyer, architect, and museum curator. They came from a wide range of countries: Canada, China, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Russia, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. And they not only drew on examples of record making and archiving in their own countries to address the seminar themes, but some spoke on Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cuba, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Senegal, South Africa, and Spain, as well as Guadeloupe and colonial Java. Francis X. Blouin, Jr., the director of the Bentley Library, and William G. Rosenberg, of the University of Michigan's Department of History, chaired the Sawyer Seminar and brought together forty-six of the seminar papers for publication as editors of this book.

The editors lay out the book's general response to the questions above by saying that "the archive itself is not simply a reflection or an image of an event but also shapes the event, the phenomena of its origins. To put the matter somewhat differently, all archival records are not only themselves the product of social, cultural, and especially political processes; they very much affect the workings of these processes as well, and hence they influence the kinds of realities that archival collections reflect" (p. 2). To know what we can about how records are shaped by their societies and how they shape reality, we need to know about how this process works. When records and archiving practices become the subject of close study themselves, they no longer remain the straightforward authorities on the past we have often assumed them to be. But, at the same time, they grow far more rich in information. As Ziva Galili writes in her essay on 1917 Menshevik Party records, "the point is not that archival documentation holds the key to a singular historical truth," but that it offers "a multiplicity of histories" (pp. 448–49). Although this represents a key step away from the conventional notion that archives convey *the* truth about the past, it actually brings us closer to the truth, if we now understand it to be more elusive because documents relate to complex lived experiences, but cannot simply duplicate them. Archival records are not only evidence of the intentions and actions of their initial inscribers, but also of subsequent interpretations, uses, and impacts of those records. In archival reading rooms, we encounter the cumulative evidence of a great many interactions over time among various people (from initial inscribers to archivists and researchers) with phenomena that concern them. Just as it has at any particular moment of reading throughout its history, this accumulated evidence has power to shape what we understand to be the realities it represents, because our understanding of the evolving contexts that give it those meanings is inevitably limited.

Every essay in this book contributes in one way or another to the idea that what we can know of this evidence is the product of our understanding of what

the history of records and archives conveys about it. The book widens our understanding of the contexts that help us to make such meaning. The greater our understanding of this history, the more we will know about what the records can tell us, and the better the archival service we can provide. What we archivists think is relevant and adequate knowledge of it will affect every function we perform. These essays touch on a great many aspects of it.

History does not begin with the past as such, but with our interactions as archivists and researchers with records, influenced by all the societal factors that bring us to that point and make it *our* interaction rather than another's. Carolyn Steedman discusses the "passion" that often drives that interaction. David Lowenthal's lament about the "fall from virtue" of archives from "paragons of trustworthy permanence" is itself an example of this passion (p. 193). The book shows that the long, complex process of records formation is shaped all along the way by social and political conditions. They affect who can record, classify, keep or destroy, as well as what they can say, why, from what vantage point, and using what technologies of communication. Anne Stoler's essay on the colonial archive of the Dutch Indies and Penelope Paipias's essay on transcripts of oral interviews made by a Greek archives give particularly rich insight into the sociopolitical sources and effects of this record-making work. The characteristics of recording technologies—their durability, ease of use, and ability to attract our interest and trust above other technologies—receive attention in Joan Schwartz's essay on nineteenth-century photography and in Nancy Bartlett's on language itself in relation to the archives of art. In his essay, Stephen Nichols discusses the information borne in the very materiality of the technologies and in the reformatting of records across time. The classification or naming of records in recordkeeping schema, or their designation as secret, available, or partly so, at given and changing times, by whom and why, is examined in essays by Eric Ketelaar on the contest for power through control of information that archives participate in. These themes are also developed by Abby Smith and Jeffrey Burds on access to Soviet archives and by Beatrice Bartlett, Du Mei, and William Kirby on access to Chinese archives. Atina Grossmann's essay on her own family's Holocaust archives prompts consideration of the meanings records convey of their evolving uses and interpretations, changing and multiple custodians, recontextualizations, reorganizations, and the destruction of some or all of a given body of them during its custodial history prior to archiving, as well as the decision about whether to archive any of it in formal archival institutions.

Archiving work done with records affects the reality they convey when we select only some and destroy or ignore most others. This is a theme of Terry Cook's essay on appraisal and Patrick Geary's on medieval archivist-monks who authored changes in archival records. Archivists influence what records tell us by describing them in certain ways. Elizabeth Yakel and Laura Millar discuss, respectively, the limits of "representation" of archival records in descriptive

work, and of Canada's still partial effort to develop a national descriptive system. The theft, tampering, loss, and damage that can occur at any time across the records' history can affect their meanings, as can preservation interventions (Nichols again). Kathleen Marquis stresses the importance of understanding the archivist's active role in shaping research through reference services, and Ian Wilson personifies it with his passionate hope that, through much heavier emphasis on public programming, a far wider public will come to share archivists' appreciation of the great utility of records.

As many contributors note, archivists thus help create certain kinds of new knowledge (rather than merely guarding and retrieving it fully formed already) by extolling archives and mediating what they know of them to users and society as a whole. The users of archival records then raise up certain ones to a place of public honor, pass over others as uninteresting, and find some offensive, all of which shapes archival work accordingly, as Jim O'Toole notes in his contribution. The resulting knowledge and conceptions of records and archives affect political contexts that, in turn, govern the work of archiving in particular ways. For this theme, see Frederick Cooper on Senegal, Laurent Dubois on Guadeloupe, Paule René-Bazin and Jennifer Milligan on France, and Brian Williams and William Wallach on South Africa.

Taken together, the essays in this book show that records and archiving convey far more information about human activity than we will obtain from the conventional focus on the evidence they bear of the actions of the records' initial inscribers, and that they do far more to shape reality than to duplicate and preserve it. Archivists have been developing this extended and new view of the history of records and archives since the early 1990s. This book joins a number of other key collaborative contributions to this effort: Carolyn Hamilton, et al. (eds.), *Refiguring the Archive* (Cape Town, 2002); the two theme issues of *Archival Science* (2002) on "Archives, Records, and Power" edited by Cook and Schwartz; Sue McKemmish, et al. (eds.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society* (Wagga Wagga, 2005); and the two meetings of the International Conference on the History of Records and Archives in 2003 and 2005. (See *Archivaria* 60 for articles given as papers at the 2003 conference.) The distinctive contribution of *Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Social Memory* is that it is the most ambitious of these interdisciplinary international efforts. It provides much more information in one volume about the varied and complex histories of records and archives worldwide than the others.

This complexity scuttles any hope of capturing it in the rather cramped confines of typical archival standards and systems. As Millar writes, it has a "chaotic" quality that defies conventional descriptive systems, in Canada, for example (p. 190). This book gives us many more reasons to rethink profoundly archival concepts and practices in light of new insights into this wide-ranging knowledge of the history of records and archives, but it does not go as far as it

might have in that direction. This work is going on, as the appearance of these other publications in the six years since the Sawyer Seminar indicates. Building on these and other efforts to advance that rethinking further could be the welcome theme of a follow-up Sawyer Seminar.

TOM NESMITH
Archival Studies
University of Manitoba

Privacy and Confidentiality Perspectives: Archivists and Archival Records

Edited, with an introduction, by Menzi L. Behrnd-Klodt and Peter J. Wosh. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005. 400 pp. Available from the Society of American Archivists, $40.00 members, $56.00 nonmembers. ISBN 1-931666-10-5.

Oh, how I wish this book had been available early in my career as an archivist. What different approaches might I have taken to address—or at least think about—the issues of privacy and confidentiality. The editors have united successfully in one volume a collection of thought-provoking articles and introductory commentaries that together provide an excellent place to begin to delve deeper into these often ambiguous and confounding subjects. In addition, four handy appendices provide easy access to some details of related legislation in the United States, Canada, and Europe.

And what important subjects these are. As noted in the introduction, concerns about privacy and confidentiality have been quite real since the attacks in New York and Washington in 2001. Archivists most recently have been working in a climate of increased secrecy. An executive order sought to overturn provisions of the Presidential Records Act; the Freedom of Information Act has become increasingly restricted; and the USA PATRIOT Act passed. The editors confirm that archivists think about privacy a great deal and in "their own special way." This volume focuses on issues of privacy as they relate to different sectors of the archival community and, collectively, the essays reflect the thoughts of a variety of archivists at a specific and important moment in American history.

The backgrounds of the editors shine through in their approach to the subject and likely influenced some of the emphasis in article selection and solicitation. Menzi L. Behrnd-Klodt's background as both archivist and attorney is apparent as she guides the reader through some clarifying definitions and classic articles that influenced modern privacy discussions—articles that often appear as mere footnotes in the basic archival literature. Peter J. Wosh, as former director of several religious-affiliated archives and now an archival educator at New York University, brings his sensitivity to an important area of archival work often underemphasized in the general archival literature as well

as a keen eye to the construction of a volume that will be useful as much to the practitioner as to the graduate student undertaking a deeper look at a critical subject.

The volume is divided into four broad perspectives: legal, ethical, administrative, and institutional. Editors' commentary on the subject and the articles that follow introduce each section—commentary that overall is as useful and stimulating as the articles. Of the sixteen essays, three were published previously and one is an expansion of a presentation made at an annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists. Two of the reprints are classics in the privacy literature and provide the kind of historical context that most archivists should appreciate. Both the 1890 *Harvard Law Review* article, "The Right to Privacy," by Samuel D. Warren and Louis D. Brandeis and William L. Prosser's "Privacy," which appeared in 1960 in the *California Law Review,* trace the important steps in the articulation of the right to privacy. Behrnd-Klodt's final essay in the legal section interprets for archivists Prosser's four aspects of the tort right of privacy that have been enacted into law in whole or in part in many state legislatures.

The section on ethical perspectives is compelling reading for archivists who must balance the competing tensions of protecting personal privacy and guaranteeing open access to records. After an introduction that provides a brief timeline delineating changing archival points of view on the subject from the mid-1970s to the present, the section begins with a thoughtful update by Heather MacNeil on her influential work, *Without Consent: The Ethics of Disclosing Personal Information in Public Archives* (1992). The early 1990s were a vital time for archival thinking on the subject, and reprinted in this section from the *Journal of American History* in 1992 is Judith Schwarz's important article, "The Archivist's Balancing Act: Helping Researchers While Protecting Individual Privacy." Schwarz, who helped build the field of gay and lesbian history in the 1970s, describes her dilemma as archivist and founder of the Lesbian Herstory Archives in balancing institutional considerations with personal reasons for requiring access restrictions to materials. The essay that follows by Elena S. Danielson of the Hoover Institution adds an important international perspective to the discussion by comparing the handling of the records of the East German State Security Service (Stasi) with comparable circumstances in other Eastern European countries. With ample and excellent examples, she warns readers that globalization is compounding the complexity of privacy issues. Finally, Martin Levitt of the American Philosophical Society Library provides a case study on the creation of a Web site documenting the history of the eugenics movement. This constructive essay shows not only how privacy concerns impact technologically savvy outreach projects, it also provides a few ideas on how to address the maze of related issues.

The essays in the longest—and useful but somewhat less focused—section of the volume put a spotlight on the administrative challenges of practicing

archivists. Sara S. Hodson, curator of manuscripts at the Huntington Library, examines in detail the difficulties of collecting the papers of prominent authors and literary manuscripts during an era of increasingly aggressive collecting and extraordinary public interest in the lives of celebrities. She describes the attendant privacy issues, resulting heavy restrictions, and the urge of some families simply to destroy records. Timothy D. Pyatt of Duke University considers, with even more practical application, similar issues relating to "family honor" at the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina. Pyatt dissects the history of donor relations in the acquisition of sensitive papers from literary figures Shelby Foote and Walker Percy. Sarah Rowe-Sims, Sandra Boyd, and H. T. Holmes recount the struggle that archivists faced in bringing professional insights into the decision-making process in the management of the records of the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission, established in the 1950s to investigate and resist the voting rights movement in that state. It would be an interesting exercise to compare their archival pressures and results with those described earlier by Danielson.

A very short but useful piece by Behrnd-Klodt explains the nature and effect of legal privileges in archival records. Once again, Behrnd-Klodt's unique background and training provide valuable context and precise, well-articulated definitions of American legal privileges—definitions that I suspect elude most archivists. The final essay in the section by Mark A. Greene of the American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming and Christine Weideman of Manuscripts and Archives at the Yale University Library calls upon college and university archivists to take action and demand clarification of the ever-ambiguous Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), better known as the Buckley Amendment. The authors reveal results of a survey undertaken for this volume to assess how college and university archives currently interpret and administer FERPA. They also include a copy of the letter they wrote to the U.S. Department of Education urging clarification of the act.

The editors conclude the volume by asking readers to view privacy and confidentiality within different institutional contexts and to seek a more theoretical framework for considering the issues across institutional boundaries. Clearly, Wosh brings into play in this section his perspective on and interest in the archives of religious organizations. This is one of the better-written introductory essays, and the section benefits from a bit more subject depth by the inclusion of two articles about the concerns and approaches of archivists working with the records of organized and hierarchical religion. Mark J. Duffy of the Archives of the Episcopal Church USA and Christine M. Taylor, chancellor of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Seattle, write about issues of human agency and trust and their obligations and opportunities in organizational documentation. L. Dale Patterson of the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church provides examples of factors in the

history and decision making in that church that affected attitudes toward privacy and confidentiality. He also makes suggestive comments about the role that the increasing size of an organization plays in increased demand for accountability. Both are positive pieces that point to the potential power of archives in the life of an institution. Barbara L. Craig, who teaches in the Faculty of Information Studies at the University of Toronto, also presents a positive view on the role that archivists can play, especially over time, in the debates over records privacy in the medical and health care industries. But these optimistic views are challenged by IBM archivist Paul C. Lasewicz whose world was rocked early on by concerns over the digital dissemination of sensitive information and corporate fears about privacy and licensing violations. He appears convinced that archival programs may likely become marginalized as they are recognized as significant corporate liabilities.

This volume is not a basic reader. Instead, it places privacy and confidentiality into a broader context. If changes in practice and theory in these areas shift focus or direction in the next few years, much here will need to be updated. But, the volume will continue to have value as an encapsulation of some of the profession's thinking in the early part of this century. In the next such volume, it would be useful to learn more about the challenges—and there are many—faced by college and university archivists beyond FERPA. In addition, it would be helpful to see more in-depth analyses of issues facing national archives in the United States., Canada, and well beyond North America. To their credit, the editors have included far more than the usual references to the thoughts and work of our colleagues abroad. We will always act locally, but in such important areas such as privacy and confidentially, we need to think even more globally.

Megan Sniffin-Marinoff
Harvard University Archives

Archives and Archivists in the Information Age

By Richard J. Cox. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2005. 325 pp. Soft cover. Available from the Society of American Archivists, $75.00 members, $85.00 nonmembers. ISBN 1-55570-530-8.

There can be little argument that Richard J. Cox is our most prolific writer on archival topics. The joy in reading Cox is that he almost always has interesting and provocative things to say and this work does not disappoint on that count. Starting on the first page with the assertion that "The era of massive collecting by archival and historical records repositories, the primary means by which the archival records of organizations like corporations have been saved (when they have been saved) is ending, if it has not already ended." Long live the institutional archive—the future of the field!

Some might say this is simply the logical outcome of Cox's direction ever since the Pitt Electronic Records Project. However, that's too simplistic; his work over the last decade has covered all the bases, and he's written as much for collecting repository archivists as for institutional archivists. Yet, there is a clear trend in Cox's writing that says the future of archival development—that is, caring for the records of governmental bodies, business and industrial corporations, universities, hospitals, and other nonprofit institutions and organizations—is in the institutional archives created by the organization itself.

Nowhere is this clearer than in the growing necessity to manage and preserve the massive amounts of electronic records generated by institutions. Few if any collecting repositories will be able to do this for other organizations in any practical fashion. They may cherry-pick discrete electronic publications and manage digitized image files for storage in their institutional repositories. But the commitment necessary, the need to embed a repository's staff in another organization's IT infrastructure at a distance, the frequency of consultation and service required, and the potential level of resources on call for an indefinite future are very likely more than almost any collecting repository will be willing or able to undertake.

Thus, the work under review here is the initial volume in a new series, *The Archivist's and Records Manager's Bookshelf*, from Neal-Schuman. Series editor Greg Hunter says this volume "brings to light the changing role of the archivists and the transforming dimensions of information and definitions of our organizations in the digital age" (p. viii). It is both history and vision for the future.

However, like a number of Cox's other books, this is a compilation of previously published articles, revised and expanded to some degree, and most previously appearing in *Records and Information Management Report*, a periodical edited by none other than Richard J. Cox. A certain unevenness is to be expected in any edited volume; however, what faults there may be here are Cox's alone.

The first three chapters on the role of archivists, archival consultants, and defining job ads and position descriptions seem ostensibly designed for outsiders. Cox says that institutional managers need to understand why archivists are vital to their organizations, and we cannot disagree. However, one wonders how a manager pondering the hiring of an archivist would ever locate this advice. Really Cox is writing for his colleagues and students. He is laying out the characteristics and qualifications his model archivist should fulfill. Similarly, he's teaching the nascent archival consultant what to do as well as reminding all of us we should be doing systematic self-evaluation on a regular basis. In his third chapter on defining archival positions, he cuts to the bone. His study of nearly thirty years of job ads shows little change despite dramatic impacts of technology on our field. Why haven't our educational programs changed? We're too tied to traditional approaches; we're largely ignoring the role of information

technology in recordkeeping. His worry? We may become irrelevant to most institutions with a need to manage records all along the continuum.

The next three chapters focus more directly on us—the practicing archivists. First we are missing in the media. Our writing just doesn't get out much; news and magazine coverage of records and their custodians is stereotypical. Cox says, ". . .archivists and records managers might wonder whether they can ever position themselves to affect public policy, funding, and understanding of what they do and why it is important" (p. 92). He admits in the end, we don't get many chances, but we have to try and take advantage of the opportunities we do get. His fifth chapter on credentials and professional identity tells us he's abandoned personal certification as useless and despairs of our embracing the professional knowledge base. We return to education in chapter 6 and here distance education gets the boot. There's not much good about it that couldn't be improved by everyone sitting around the seminar table engaging in deep discussion. Chapter 9 should also join this group; it's one of the best pieces in the book—an in-depth analysis of archival literature and its trends and problems, and a pleasure for any writer among us to read.

Please don't mistake my lighter tone as dismissive. These are important topics and Cox treats them with depth and grit. As an archival educator myself, I find much here to chew on. I've taught by interactive television to remotely located students, and the challenges are all he reports, and more. That distance education is primarily driven by money and turning students into consumers rather than intellectual partners is a valid concern, but that is the fundamental problem of American higher education itself over the last thirty years. It seems unfair to single out distance education as the primary culprit.

Chapters 7 and 8 most clearly represent why most will have bought the book. "The Archivist in the Knowledge Age; What Have We Become?" takes us inside the organization where new management concepts are raging: re-engineering the organization and re-inventing government, and, most intriguing, knowledge management itself. These trends force us to ask what our role will be. Cox's answer is that it's largely up to us—if we can be entrepreneurial within the organization and really sell our value, we can be successful. While paperwork is perceived as something bad in these cultures, knowledge management is largely amorphous. There is a vacuum where traditional archives and records management programs are in stasis or actual failure. Cox sees electronic recordkeeping as an opportunity for records professionals to stake out issues like lifespan, access and privacy, and the definition of a record. We must refocus on the needs of the organization and make sure our mission is seen as congruent with the organization's and that we are bringing something valuable and innovative to the table.

Chapter 8, "Records, Documents, and Stuff in the Digital Era," seeks to grapple with the meaning of information and records and all of the paradoxes

they bring to our attention. Perhaps Cox's best thought comes near the end: "Information, no matter how good it is or how much, is meaningless without understanding. Otherwise we are just playing with lots of stuff, and the people and organizations relying on records and documents for evidence, accountability, and memory will be lost in cyberspace" (p. 219). As often happens in this volume, Cox can't withhold his exasperation with those who simply want to know how to do it. This chapter will drive them crazy, and we can't escape realizing that that fact drives Cox crazy.

And so, the book concludes with something seemingly anomalous: four case studies in institutional archives, apparently designed for those who, candle-less, have spent the previous 260 pages cursing the gloom. These cases, drawn from Cox's consulting experiences, however, amply demonstrate many of his earlier points, especially concerning what institutional managers think archives are and archivists do. He calls this chapter "Putting It All Together," and for those looking for practical advice, there's a lot to be gleaned here. At the same time, this section also puts together many of the points he argues throughout the book. It nicely demonstrates that all this theorizing really does emerge from a keen mind observing practice. It becomes quite clear by the end, it's not "much ado about shelving" that he's about here.

LEE STOUT
Public Services and Outreach
Eberly Family Special Collections Library
Pennsylvania State University

The American Archivist Editorial Policy

The *American Archivist* is the semi-annual journal of the Society of American Archivists. It seeks to reflect thinking about theoretical and practical developments in the archival profession, particularly in North America; about the relationships between archivists and the creators and users of archives; and about cultural, social, legal, and technological developments that affect the nature of recorded information and the need to create and maintain it.

The *American Archivist* is a refereed journal. Each submission will be reviewed by experts in the subject matter of the submission and a final decision for publication will be based on this review.

Journal Contents

The *American Archivist* features a variety of types and lengths of articles. Except for book reviews, all inquiries and submissions should be directed to Mary Jo Pugh, Editor, *American Archivist*, 2928 Deerpark Drive, Walnut Creek, CA 94598. Telephone/Fax: (925) 938–1419. E-mail: AmericanArchivist@archivists.org.

Research Articles are analytical and critical expositions based on original investigation or on systematic review of literature. A wide variety of subjects are encouraged.

Case Studies are analytical reports of projects or activities that take place in a specific setting and offer the basis for emulation or comparison in other settings.

Perspectives are commentaries or reflective or opinion pieces addressing issues or practices that concern archivists and their constituents.

International Scene pieces may include elements of any of the above formats in covering archival developments outside the United States.

Professional Resources can be annotated bibliographies, other items designed for practical use within the profession, or essays that review developments (as opposed to the literature) in specified areas in a way that describes particular initiatives and places them in the context of broader trends.

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The **Forum** contains letters to the editor commenting on recently published articles or other topics of interest to the profession.

Manuscript Submission Requirements

Manuscripts submitted electronically as e-mail attachments are preferred. Electronic submissions should be in Microsoft Word or in Rich Text Format. For hard-copy submissions, please send four copies of the manuscript for all types of articles. Both text (including lengthy block quotations) and notes should be double-spaced. Footnotes are preferred over endnotes. All pages should be numbered. The author's name and address should appear only on the title page, which should be separate from the main text of the manuscript. The preferred maximum length is 8,000 words for research articles and surveys and 3,000 words for case studies and perspectives, but these length requirements can be waived for certain articles in consultation with the editor. All articles should be accompanied by a 100-word abstract and author's biographical statement.

Illustrations are welcome for all types of articles. Please do not embed images in text. Only photocopies of photographs need be included with the initial submission of an article, with markers in the text for placement. Photo captioning should be on a separate list at the end of the article. Digital images (300-dpi tif or jpg) will be required when and if the article is accepted for publication.

Editors of the *American Archivist* use the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition (University of Chicago Press, 2003), as the standard of style and footnote format and *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language* (Merriam-Webster Inc., 1995) for spelling. Terms having special meanings for members of the profession should conform to the definitions in *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* by Richard Pearce-Moses (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005). Authors' variations from these standards should be minimal and purposeful. It is expected upon acceptance that authors will provide an electronic version of their manuscript either as an e-mail attachment or on diskette, if an electronic version has not already been submitted.

The *American Archivist* will not consider a manuscript that is being reviewed by another journal at the same time, nor will it normally consider an article that has been published previously in a similar form. A separate reprinting policy has been prepared, but normally reprinting will be initiated by the editor.

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Additional Inquiries

Address additional inquiries about the *American Archivist* to Teresa Brinati, Director of Publishing, Society of American Archivists, 527 S. Wells St., 5th Floor, Chicago, IL 60607–3922. Telephone: (312) 922–0140. Fax (312) 347–1452. E-mail: tbrinati@archivists.org. Web site: www.archivists.org.

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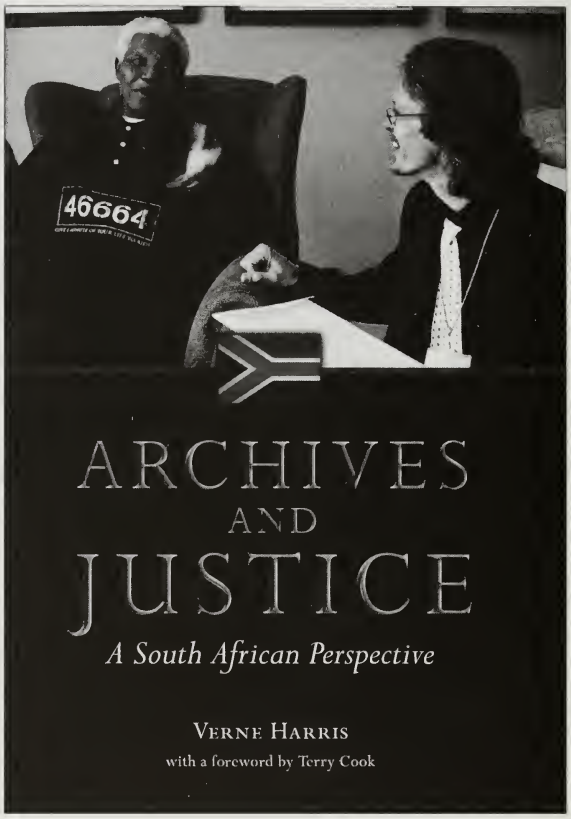

A collection of Verne Harris's best writing during the first decade of South Africa's postapartheid democracy. While South Africa is his immediate context, Harris always engages wider geographical and conceptual worlds. He insistently explores two intersecting nexuses—archives and justice, local and global. Drawing on the energies of Derridean deconstruction, he suggests an ethics, and a politics, expressed in the maxim "memory for justice." And he portrays the work of archives as a work of critical importance to the building of democracy.

Verne Harris is the project manager for the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory and an honorary research associate at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa.

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Karen F. Gracy holds an MLIS and PhD in library and information science, and an MA in critical studies of film and television, from the University of California, Los Angeles.

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Designed specifically to assist those planning archival facilities, and especially directed to those who have never taken on this responsibility. It can also be used as a text to educate architects and others working with archival building planners about specific functional and collection needs. The book covers the building process; renovating existing buildings; technical issues, such as fire protection, security and the building environment; equipment, including shelving; and move planning. Includes a glossary of terms, recently completed facilities, and a listing of equipment and moving companies.

Thomas P. Wilsted is director of the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center at the University of Connecticut.

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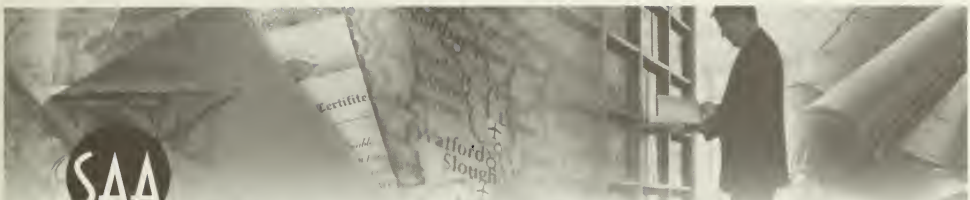

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